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Thomas Driscoll
A Wrexham
COLLECTION
OF *1852*
TOURS IN WALES;
OR, A *7K*
DISPLAY
OF THE
BEAUTIES OF WALES:

Selected principally from
CELEBRATED
HISTORIES AND POPULAR TOURS,
With
OCCASIONAL REMARKS.



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Mr. Quiscoll
Wrexham

PREFACE.

SEVERAL of the most popular and interesting TOURS in WALES having become *scarce*, the present Editor has been induced to compress various selections from them into one volume, leaving each Tourist to pursue his respective track.

To have digested the whole into one regular journey, might to some travellers have appeared desirable; but in that case, much of the beauty and scenery of the county would have been unnoticed from the external or internal situation of particular objects; whereas, by dividing it into separate sections, each rout becomes more fully de-

scribed. Hence, whoever may be desirous to make any part of the Tour of Wales, will almost every where find an excursion marked out, its antiquities and beauties described, with every other leading feature of local interest, or literary illustration.

In some instances, where authors may have differed in their narratives, it has been thought advisable to retain each description, for the sake of obtaining a more *accurate account of places*. This will undoubtedly afford considerable novelty and utility to the work.

In exploring the picturesque beauties of WALES, it is hoped therefore that this little volume will be found essentially useful. It has been long allowed that no country can boast of richer prospects, or encompass scenes of more historic celebrity.

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THE
COUNTIES OF NORTH WALES
ARE,

Anglesea, Caernarvonshire, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Merionethshire, and Montgomeryshire.

ANGLESEA is 28 miles long and thirteen broad, has two towns and seventy-four parishes; it produces copper, mill and grind stones, red, yellow, and blue ochre, fine pastures, with corn and cattle.

Caernarvonshire is forty-eight miles broad, twenty-three long, has five towns and sixty-eight parishes; its products are timber, slate, goats, copper, fish, &c.

Denbighshire is fifty miles long and twenty broad, has four towns and fifty-seven parishes; its manufactures are those of gloves and flannels, and its products corn, horned cattle and lead.

Flintshire is thirty-three miles long and eleven broad, has three towns and twenty-eight parishes; it produces cattle, butter, honey coal and lead; it has likewise a cotton and twist, and copper manufactory.

Merionethshire is forty miles long and thirty-six broad, has four towns and thirty-seven parishes; it abounds with cattle, sheep, fish, and game; its chief manufacture is cottons.

Montgomeryshire is forty miles long and thirty-seven broad, has six towns and forty-seven parishes; it has lead, plenty of fish and fowls, with a breed of large black cattle and horses; its principal manufacture is flannel.

THE
COUNTIES OF SOUTH WALES
ARE

*Brecknockshire, Cardiganshire, Caermarthenshire,
Glamorganshire, Pembrokeshire, and Radnor-
shire.*

BRECKNOCKSHIRE is thirty-three miles long, thirty-two broad, has four towns and sixty-one parishes; its product is corn, fowl, fish, and cattle; its manufactures are woollen stuffs and stockings.

Cardiganshire is forty-seven miles long, twenty broad, has six towns and sixty-four parishes; it produces corn, plenty of cattle, game, with sea and river fish, has mines of lead, copper and silver ore.

Caermarthenshire is forty-eight miles long, twenty-eight broad, has eight towns, eighty-seven parishes. This county is well clothed with wood, and feeds vast numbers of cattle; it abounds with fowl, fish and game, and has coal and lead mines.

Glamorganshire is fifty miles long and twenty-four broad, has nine towns, one hundred and eighteen parishes; it produces pastures, corn, and pit-coal, culm and lead ore.

Pembrokeshire is thirty-five miles long, twenty-nine broad, has four towns, and one hundred and forty-five parishes; it produces corn, sheep, cattle, fowls, and fish, with coal mines, and marl.

Radnorshire is thirty miles long and twenty-five broad; it has four towns and fifty-two parishes; its produce is cattle, sheep, horses, and cheese, and its only manufacture malt.

Instructions for pronouncing the Welsh.

AS some of the names of the places in the following Tours are written according to the Welsh orthography, it is necessary to inform the English reader, that the material difference of pronunciation depends on the following characters:

C, in Welsh, is pronounced as K in English-

F, as *V*.

G, as G hard in *Gun*: and never soft, as in *Gin*:

W, as *Oo* in *Good*.

Dd, as *Th*.

Ll, as *Tbl*, strongly aspirated.

Y, in any syllable of a word, except the last, as *U* in *burn*; but in the last syllable, as the English *I* in *Birth*.

A specimen of the two last characters occurs in the word *Llavyllyn*, a town in Montgomeryshire, which is pronounced *Tblan-vuth-lin*.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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A specimen of the two line character is

...in the world, I have not seen it

which is produced

1977-1978

INTRODUCTION.

THE origin of every nation is necessarily obscure, and always lost in a pretended antiquity. On the authority of Bochart we may trace the Welsh from a very early period indeed. That Britain, however, was peopled from Gaul 1000 years before Christ, appears very probable; the arguments in favour of this opinion are deduced from the state of population on the continent, and from the progress of it in the island itself. It has been well observed,†

B

† Mr. Whitaker.

that names descriptive of national manners cannot be the original appellations of any people; they result from the intercourse and experience of the states around them, on whose territories they have dared to incroach.

The name of Cymri appears to have been the great hereditary distinction of the Gauls upon the continent, and to have been carried with them into all their conquests; it was not retained in our island merely by the natives of Wales, but was equally the appellation of a nation in the south-west of Somersetshire and the north-east of Cornwall.

The first denomination of our island was certainly Albion, a name given before the country was inhabited: it was the Celtic term for heights or eminences. The Alps, some ages before the days of Strabo,

INTRODUCTION.

3

were called Albia; and in his time there remained two tribes on the mountains that bore the names of Albicæci and Albienfes.

The second denomination was that of Britain, derived from a Celtic word likewise, signifying *divided*, not *painted*: this etymology has lately been proved not to have been applied to the region, but bestowed on the inhabitants; not previously borne on the continent by the original settlers of the country, but assumed or received at their first removal into the island.

The general denomination of *Wales*, was not imposed on the country by the Saxons, but was the acknowledged appellation of the region as early as the sixth century, if we may believe a quotation from Talieffin, as cited by Mr. Davies.

When that part of Britain, which comprehends the present kingdom of England and principality of Wales, was divided into several petty kingdoms, the inhabitants were all distinguished by different names. The principality of Wales, formerly comprehending the whole country beyond the Severn, was in the Roman times occupied by the Silures, the Dimetæ, and Ordovices; to these belonged not only the twelve counties of Wales, but likewise the two others lying beyond the Severn, Herefordshire, and Monmouthshire, which in the reign of Charles the Second were first reckoned amongst the English counties.

The country now known by the name of North Wales was inhabited by the Ordovices only, who held out first against the Romans, and afterwards against the English, after

the other Britons were subdued; for by the Romans they were not reduced till the time of Domitian, nor by the English till the reign of Henry the First.

About forty-five years before the Christian æra, Britain was first invaded by the Romans under Julius Cæsar; afterwards by Claudius, and at length became a province under the Roman empire; it was governed by lieutenants, or deputies, sent from Rome, as Ireland is now by deputies from England; and continued thus under the Romans for upwards of 400 years; till that empire being invaded by the Goths and Vandals, the Romans were forced not only to recall their own armies, but also to draw from hence the bravest of the Britons, for their assistance against those barbarians.

The country being left in a defenceless state, was invaded by the Scots, who were so rapacious, that the Britons sent over a miserable application for relief to Ætius, the Roman general, who, by several famous successes, for a time had repelled the violence of the Gothic arms; but, receiving no hopes of any succours from that general, the South Britons invited over the Saxons, who no sooner delivered them from their ancient foes the Picts and Scots, than they strengthened their own numbers, turned their arms against the natives, and conquered them, some few excepted, who secured themselves in the mountains of Wales; whence their descendants have always been distinguished by the title of *Ancient Britons*.

Wales was anciently bounded by the Irish seas, and by the Rivers Se-

vern and Dee, till the Saxons became masters of all the level countries over those rivers; and till *Offa*, * *King of Mercia*, made the celebrated trench, which is still called by his name. This trench, which extended from north to south; from the mouth of the river Dee to that of the Wye, has been thought to have been an imitation of the ramparts which were throwu up by Agricola, Adriana, and Severus, to guard the Romans against the incursions of the northern barbarians.

Notwithstanding many attempts of the English, the Welsh enjoyed their own laws, and lived under their own princes, till, in the year 1282, Llewellyn lost both his principality and life. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, Wales was incorporated and

B 4.

* See Tour from Chester, &c.

united with England; and, by a statute of the 27th of that reign, all the laws and liberties of England were to take place there; from which time the Welch have approved themselves truly worthy of their high origin, loyal and dutiful to their King, and always zealous for the welfare of the community.

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* See Town from Chelmsford, &c.

ROMANTIC PARTS
OF
NORTH WALES,
FROM
SHREWSBURY TO CAERNARVON,
AND THE
VALE of CLYD.

B 5

THE HISTORY OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF
SHREWSBURY & CARRINGTON
AND THE
VILLAGE OF
WILLE & CARRINGTON

ROMANTIC PARTS

OF

NORTH WALES, &c.

THE romantic beauties of nature are so singular and extravagant in the principality of Wales, particularly in the counties of Merioneth and Caernarvon, that they are scarcely to be conceived by those who have confined their curiosity to the other parts of Great Britain.

This journey was undertaken rather late in the autumn; the season proved remarkably favourable; neither rains nor winds impeded my progress—the air on the mountains

was left rarefied by the summer's heat, the sun shone out all the day on Cader, and Snowdon had not begun to fortify himself against this almost winter approach.

I set out from Shrewsbury to Welsh Poole—the last eight miles afforded a most beautiful prospect of a rich vale in Montgomeryshire. The vales throughout this country are remarkably pleasant, and abound with corn, and are luxuriant in pasturage.

Welsh Poole is a place of some note—it is one of the five boroughs in Montgomeryshire, which jointly send a member to Parliament. It takes its name from a contemptible black pool, which is said to be unfathomable.

The gentlemen in this town and neighbourhood have, with becoming spirit and liberality, opened a

subscription for the purpose of erecting a county-hall, market-place, and other rooms, for public convenience and accommodation in this town, which is expected will be soon carried into effect.

The country from Welsh Poole towards Llalymynach is most beautifully broken into gentle risings, prettily wooded. Gilesfield church and village are pleasingly situated under the hills. The church is dedicated to St. Giles. Tanner says it was founded in 1170.

About a mile from hence stands Powis Castle, or *Red Castle*, from the colour of the stones of which it is built. The situation of it is certainly very noble; but I cannot agree with Lord Lyttleton, that three thousand pounds would make it the most august place in the kingdom; there is much to be done in the mere ap-

proach, and at present you are obliged to ask where the Severn runs. The ground is laid out in that formal style of gardening that was brought in at the Revolution, and there will be much difficulty in altering it with propriety.

On my return to Poole, I ordered a carriage to convey me to Llanvair; this was to be my last stage on known ground—the road was perfectly good, the people in general spoke English, and their civility was so remarkable, that the very turnpike man was grateful for the toll. I was here most strongly recommended to a good house, about twelve miles distant, Cann's Office, a very respectable inn, and far superior to those at Llanvair. About two miles from Cann's Office, the road enters a valley, surrounded by mountains which continue to Mallevyd, where

a post-chaise may be had, an accommodation not to be met with at Dinas-y-Mowddu. After contending with some trifling difficulties on the road, I arrived at Dinas-y-Mowddu.

This city (for *dinas* is Welsh for city) is possessed of many and great advantages; there is no body corporate to divide it into faction, there is not a single office that can possibly be contended for—the rent of houses will be the same at all seasons, and even in August you are never incommoded by the sun. The river is not large, but it will never be incroached upon by the inhabitants; their sequestered walks will never be injured by any fresh dealers in taste.

I did not see a cathedral, nor heard of either bishop or palace.

The is no court of judicature open here.

The theatre is held in great repute. I had the pleasure to be present at one play, which is here called an *interlude*, probably a corruption from our term interlude.

The road from Dinas-y-Mowddu is a grand pass between two mountains, and the views prodigiously fine. The first sight of Cader Idris disappointed me; but I soon recollected, that as I was then on high ground, it must have been from some other point of view that this mountain had rendered itself so remarkable. In the course of this reflection, I was on a sudden delighted with the country round Dolgelly; woods, rocks, a rich vale, a fine river, and, at that distance, the appearance of rather a decent town, surrounded with many gentlemen's seats; these, contrasted with the barrenness I had just travelled through,

all joined to render the prospect truly delicious.

At the inn there are good accommodations, and the person who keeps it obliging.

Barmouth, ten miles from Dolgelly: its beauties are so manifold and extraordinary, that they literally "beggars description." New pastures of the most exuberant fertility; new wood, rising in the majesty of foliage; the road curving into numberless unexpected directions, at one moment shut into a verdant recess, so contracted, that there appears scarce a bridle way out of it; at another, the azure expanse of the main ocean falling upon the eye: on all sides rocks glitter in colours of that beauty which constitutes the sublime. On the other hand, plains, villas, cottages, and venerable halls, with whatever tends to form the

middle grace that belongs to the beautiful. Such are the objects that you meet with on the way to Dolgelly.

I sent out for a guide, that I might retire to Cader Idris. On the arrival of the guide, I set out immediately, and found the tract exceedingly good, till I came to a prominent part of the mountain, and here, I must acknowledge, my head was too giddy sufficiently to admire the amazing scene that was opening to my view. At length having gained the summit (the whole ascent being near three miles) on a fine piece of level ground, I could with comfort survey the sea, the Caernarvonshire shore, and Snowdon without a cloud upon his top; lakes, rivers, rocks, and precipices, which were every way spread before me; at the bottom of the hill, on the opposite side, was a small village, to

which several were returning heavy laden from Dolgelly market: this village is remarkable for nothing but the remains of a small castle, whose miserable situation could not secure it from the depredations of Cromwell's army. In the course of my survey of the mountain, it seemed to take a thousand capricious forms; but the most wonderful part of it is the tremendous peak, which overhangs the lake of the * Three Grains: but here I shall forbear description, as a fine representation of it has been lately executed by the ingenious and accurate pencil of Mr. Wilfon. On my return I discovered, far out of any track, on the steepest part of the hill, a man ga-

* The common people believe these three large crags to have been cast out of the shoes of the giant Idris.

thering rock-moss to dye baizes red. This excrescence is chiefly sold to Dublin; it affords a most beautiful colour at first, and if mixed with proper ingredients and distilled, will, it is said, become permanent. Being very thirsty with heat and fatigue, I inquired for some goat's milk, but to no purpose; the guide, however, informed me, that he could procure me from a neighbouring cottage a liquor peculiar to that part of North Wales, which infinitely exceeded Stiom cyder; I tasted it, and found it was made of mountain ash berries and crabs or flos. It should remain at least half a year in the vessel before it is bottled off, and if it were then kept to a proper age, it would not be altogether contemptible. The tediousness of my return to Dolgelly was somewhat beguiled

by the consequential information of the guide, and I must own he greatly entertained me,

The next morning being Sunday, I went to eight o'clock prayers here; the area of the church is spacious, and the pews are neat; there is a covering roof of wood, which is necessary to aid the voice, as the floor is only clay covered with deep rushes; the congregation was large, and the service was read with devotion and propriety.

My stay was prolonged at Dolgelly, that the master of the inn, who was absent on my first arrival, and who was justly recommended to me as an intelligent person, might attend me to see the three wonderful water-falls in this neighbourhood. About five miles on the road towards Tan-y-Bwlch, immediately on having crossed a bridge, we turned

on the left hand to see the first, called Doel Malenllyn, which I take to be a part of the river Derry; this is not more than fifty feet in height, but you may afterwards trace it for near a mile, through crags and trees, before it reaches its rocky bed at the bottom: the others are falls of whose rivers, the Mowddu and Cayne; (they are called Rhaidesy-Mawddu, and Pastal-y-Cayne,) over the tops of two rocky mountains; the former perhaps may not be above one hundred feet in height, but the latter is certainly at least an hundred yards; both of them are shaded with beautiful woods on the sides of hills, whose summits are in the clouds, and whose feet are whitened by the foam of these tremendous cataracts. It may be necessary to have a guide to see them, as they lie out of the common road.

I was much struck with the situation of Mr. Oakley's house at Tany-Bwlch; at first sight it somewhat resembled Matlock Bath; but the hills in front are thrown to a fine distance, and behind the house they are covered with wood. Through a very spacious valley the river Dryryd runs, and from the tops of the mountains are frequent and not inconsiderable cataracts; indeed, most of the romantic prospects of North Wales, taken separately, are infinitely superior to those of Derbyshire; but where shall we find, within the same distance, such amazing contrast as the high polish of Kedleston opposed to the bleak horrors of the Peak?

At the distance of about three miles (the road most beautifully diversified) the scene changes on a sudden to some dark and naked preci-

pices; at the bottom is a large rocky bason, which receives the Rhaidr-du, or Black Cataract, as it is called.

The road to Harlech afforded great variety; there could scarce be more within the compass of ten miles. For the first three we surveyed "the Happy Valley;" || we then passed by a beautiful lake, and having gained the next mountain, saw the castle, situated on a high rock, which projects into the Irish sea. It must be confessed, however, that the last two miles were rather "a stair-case path;" but I have frequently travelled for twenty miles together in the midland counties of England with more danger and difficulty. In Wales one has the pleasure of seeing that they are making daily improvements in roads.

|| Vide Johnson's *Rasselas*.

Harlech stands on the north-west side of the county of Merioneth; its houses are mean. There is a good harbour for ships, but few ships for the harbour. It is remarkable only for its old decayed castle, which was defended by a British nobleman against Edward the Fourth, till an Earl of Pembroke, after almost incredible difficulties, compelled it to surrender. It has been confidently asserted, that this castle was built before Edward the first's time, and that all he did was the making some additions, especially to the fortifications; but I should be rather inclined to think that it was planned at least by Edward. A tradition goes, that the workmen, after they had got to a considerable height, were all taken off to build the castle of Aberystwith and Caernarvon; and, indeed, there are evident marks of a separation.

An unpolished people it is observed, have little or no curiosity, I had seated myself by the fire-side in one of the houses at Harlech, without the inhabitants expressing the least surprise at it ; the guide and attendants began to be rather clamorous for some refreshment, and the people at length brought them some oatmeal Bread, &c.

From Harlech a fresh guide conducted me over the top of the mountain, and I found an entire good road on my return to Tan-y-Bwlch.

Leaving my little inn there with regret, I passed a dreary cloud-capt country, till I came to a road which, for near a mile, was cut through a barren rock, and finely preparative for the scene that was to open upon me. On a sudden I came upon Point Aberglaslyn, the bridge that divides the counties of Merioneth and Caer-

narvon. It consists of only one wide stone arch, thrown over a considerable water-fall, from two perpendicular precipices; beyond it is a semicircle of rock, which forms a salmon-leap, above which, in spawning time, the fish frequently attempt to lodge themselves, at the amazing height of five or six yards: they are frequently caught here in the season with nets, and sometimes with spears that are barbed for the purpose; but having passed the bridge, how shall I express my feelings!—the dark tremendous precipices, the rapid river roaring over disjointed rocks, black caverns, and issuing cataracts; all serve to make this the noblest specimen of the horrid the eye can possibly behold: the poet has not described, nor the painter pictured so gloomy a retreat.

Having staid too long in contemplating this amazing pass, I posted as fast as possible over a rocky desert to gain some refreshment at Bethkelert, where there is a comfortable inn, at which I alighted, and was able to obtain a good repast. The guide to the top of Snowdon lives here.

The road to Caernarvon from Bethkelert, lies by the edge of a lake called Llyn Quillyn.

The vale of Festiniog, near to Tan-y-Bwlch, is a mixture of all that can delight the eye, or charm the traveller; a landscape painter might here take up his residence for months.

At Tan-y-Bwlch I had been informed that I should really meet with very decent accommodation at Bettus, and might with comfort take up my abode there for an evening. As I travelled, I reflected on Burnet's

Description of a part of Caernarvonshire, that it was "the fragment of a demolished world;" and on making some slight observations to the guide on the dreariness that surrounded me, "Aye, master," says he, "this must have been an ancient country indeed, for you see it is worn out to the very stones;" this remark, however, is probably rather good than new; but we are now arrived at Bettus, and the guide pointed to the house where I was to get lodging and entertainment.

The village is, upon the whole, pleasant; but finding the distance only six miles from Caernarvon, I was determined to proceed.

Within three miles of Caernarvon I was agreeably surpris'd with a very fine road, and a new bridge, which will open a free communication with these unfrequented regions

and induce the curious to visit the wonders of the British Alps, in preference to the mountains of Switzerland, on the Glacières of Savoy.

I passed my evening at a very good inn at Caernarvon, and having procured an intelligent guide, returned early next morning through Bettus to the foot of Snowdon.—I having left my horses at a small hut, and hired a mountaineer to carry some cordials and provisions, with a spiked stick, about ten o'clock I began to ascend the mountain. The two first miles were rather boggy and disagreeable; but, when the prospect opened, I soon forgot all difficulties:—in the course of the two last I passed by six precipices, which I believe were very formidable; but as I was near the brink, and the wind very high, I did not venture to examine too narrowly.

On the summit, which is a plain about six yards in circumference, the air was perfectly mild and serene, and I could with pleasure contemplate the amazing map that was unfolded to my view. From thence may be distinctly seen, Wicklow hills in Ireland, the Isle of Man, Cumberland, Lancashire, Cheshire, Shropshire, and part of Scotland; all the counties of North Wales, the Isle of Anglesea; rivers, plains, woods, rocks, and mountains, six and twenty lakes, and two seas; it is doubted whether there is another circular prospect so extensive in any part of the terraqueous globe. Who could take such a survey without perceiving his spirits elevated in some proportion to the height! Who could behold so bountiful a display of nature without wonder and ecstasy? Who but must feel even a degree of

pride from having gained an eminence, from which he could with ease overlook the nest of the eagle? Snowdon, from Caernarvon quay, is 3555 feet, according to General Ray.*

But as the level walks of life are best suited to the generality of mankind, it became necessary to consider that this was no spot where I could properly make any lasting abode, and that the return would be attended with at least as much difficulty as the ascent. Having descended a mile or two, I did not think it amiss to inquire about an exhausted mine that I saw at a distance; and I could make this inquiry with the better grace, as the guides had hitherto quite wondered at my prowess; the mine I was informed was only copper.

* See Philosophical Transactions, vol. lxvii,

At the foot of Snowden I turned about half a mile out of the way to see a water-fall; the side-rock was exceedingly beautiful, but the cataract itself was rather contemptible, after the noble ones I had seen in the neighbourhood of Dolgelly. As the guides seemed to think a floating island, about two miles distant, was a most wonderful phenomenon, and related many singular and surprising tales concerning it, I indulged their credulity so far as to go and inspect it. The lake, as they called it, was somewhat bigger than a common duck-pond; and the island was a knotty piece of bog, which, after very heavy rains, might very possibly float in it.

On my return to Caernarvon I examined the town and castle. The town was built by the command of Edward the first, out of the ruins

of the ancient city of Segontium, that stood a little below it: it is situated between two rivers, and has a beautiful prospect of the Isle of Anglesea; it was formerly of very great account when the Princes of Wales kept their chancery and exchequer courts there. On the west side of it stands the castle, which was built to curb the Welsh mountaineers, and secure a passage to the opposite shore. In a part of it, called the Eagle Tower, you are shewn the remains of a chamber in which Edward the Second † is said to have been born; about ten years after his birth it was besieged by the Welsh, but it was

† The cradle of that weak, wicked, unfortunate Prince is still preserved; it is now in the possession of a clergyman in Gloucestershire, to whom it descended from one of his ancestors who attended the Prince in his infancy.

afterwards repaired ; and both the town and castle had divers privileges confirmed to them by different sovereigns, down to the reign of Elizabeth ; during the last civil war they were held for King Charles, but were afterwards surrendered on conditions to the Parliament. On viewing these spacious ruins, I could only ruminate on the changes they had undergone ; to think that those walls, which heretofore resounded with acclamations on the birth of the first English Prince of Wales, should now afford shelter only to a few miserable cottages from the tempestuous blasts of the Bristol Chanel !

I made several excursions into the Isle of Anglesea, the well-known seat of the Druids : this may now be considered as classical ground ; for though Mona is destroyed, and her altars abolished ; though fires,

have consumed her groves, and her priests have perished by the sword, yet, like the Phoenix, she rises more glorious from decay; her ashes have given birth to the Caractacus of Marston, and the fate of her bards to the inspiration of Gray.

Nothing could be more delightful than the ride from Caernarvon to Bangor; to the right hand were Snowdon Hills, and to the left the river Menai, or, more properly speaking, the Strait between the continent and the Island of Anglesea; I had now got into day-light and the polite world again: there had been a diversion the night before at Caernarvon, and the road was covered over with carriages.

Bangor lies at the north end of the same frith, or arm of the sea, which is the passage to Anglesea, where it has a harbour for boats. It was

once so large as to be called Bangor the Great, and was defended with a powerful castle, built By Hugh Earl of Chester, which has long since been demolished. The town is now of very little note, except from being the see of a bilhop; the palace is neat, but deplorably situated: this is doubly mortifying in a country where every part of the neighbourhood is picturesque and pleasing.

Between Bangor and Conway I passed over the famous mountain called Penmaen Mawr. Near the summit of this mountain is a beautiful evergreen, four feet high, which has been repeatedly transplanted to Baron Hill; but, singular to remark, stripped from its native mountain, it always withered and died. The road must formerly have been very frightful, but a wall is now built to the sea side, to which it is said the city

of Dublin very largely contributed: to form this road it has already cost upwards of two thousand pounds.

From hence the country opens into a plain, which extends as far as the river Conway, the eastern limit of the county of Caernarvon. It rises out of a lake of the same name, and runs with a north-west course, receiving in the short space of twelve miles more than as many rivers; so that at Aberconway, where it discharges its waters into the Irish Sea, it is full a mile broad, and capable of bringing ships of almost any size up to the town: at present, Conway bears only some melancholy marks of what it once was.

The castle still remains one of the noblest monuments of antiquity. Though built by command of the same monarch as Caernarvon, there does not the least similitude exist be-

tween them, as this is far more regular. The outside is the same as in the time of Edward the First, except one tower, and that was not demolished with either battering engines or cannons, but by the people of the place taking stones from the foundation of it. Some remains of the principal rooms are still to be seen, the dimensions of which have been accurately given by Lord Lyttleton, and an elegant view of them in the Antiquities by Mr. Grose; but I had never seen the outside of this most venerable ruin to advantage, had I not walked over some polished ground about a quarter of a mile from it, which I believe belongs to a gentleman of Conway: there you see the castle finely sheltered by an oak wood; on one side *the chief of rivers* opening into the Irish sea, and on the other the mountains surrounding

Penmaen, with a distant country most beautifully diversified. Art and nature cannot combine to form a more various and more delicious prospect; indeed, the whole country from Conway to Llanrwist is a moving picture before the eye, and probably may be considered as the most beautiful part of Wales.

I could not possibly leave this part of the country without seeing the bridge at Llanrwist, built by Inigo Jones, and the chapel supposed to have been planned by him, which contains the rich monuments of the Guedir family. The bridge is certainly a very elegant structure, and bespeaks itself to be the work of a great architect, most probably of Jones; for I incline to the opinion that Llanrwist was the place of his nativity.

The chapel, which adjoins the parish church, was erected by Sir Richard Wynne, one of the grooms of the bedchamber to Charles the First when Prince of Wales, and was chiefly made use of for the alms-house in the neighbourhood, which was endowed by the Guedir family.

On the floor are four brass plates with drawings of figures upon each of them in the dresses of the times; one of Maria Mostyn, wife of Roger Mostyn; another of Sir Owen Wynne, another of Sir John Wynne, and a fourth of Lady Sydney Wynne, wife of Sir John Wynne. And in the corner of the chapel a stone coffin, which was removed from the abbey of Conway, about two miles from hence, on which is the following inscription:

This is the coffin of Leolinus Magnus, Prince of Wales, who was buried in the abbey of Conway, and upon the dissolution removed from thence.

On each side are six carved recesses in the figure of fleurs-de-lis, which bear evident marks of having contained brass plates, and two at the bottom of the coffin.

There is now erected in the church a gallery of exquisite workmanship, which was removed likewise from the abbey; and I was at the trouble of having a large quantity of rubbish taken away from under an old staircase, that I might inspect a stone effigy, which is said to be of Hoel Coetmore, who sold the Guedir estate to the Wynne family: the word *guedir* is supposed to signify glass, and that family probably was the first who in these parts had a house with glazed windows.

I made diligent inquiry through all Caernarvonshire, and this part of Denbighshire, for the Glyder Mountain, which Gibson has particularly

described, and which, from its singularity (says the Author of a Tour through Wales), we more wished to have seen than the summits of either Plinlimmon or Snowdon.

“ On the utmost top of this mountain, according to the Continuator of Camden, who saw it, is a prodigious pile of stones, many of which are of the magnitude of those at Stonehenge. They lie in such an irregular manner, crossing and supporting each other, that some people have imagined them to be the remains of a vast building; but Gibson more naturally supposes them to be the skeleton or ruins of the mountain, the weaker parts of which may have been worn away in a series of ages, by the rains and melting of the snow.”

I was equally unfortunate in not being able to see this mountain; but, in crossing the wide ferry at Conway, I by accident gained such information, that I am confident any future traveller may very readily satisfy his curiosity; an old boatman there informed me, that he had frequently seen it—that in his younger days, indeed, it was sometimes termed the Glyder, but it was now known only by the name of Wythwar—that it was within a mile or two of a village called Clynog, and upon the shore almost opposite Caernarvon.

On my way to St. Asaph, I passed over the top of Penmaen Rofs, a steep and formidable mountain; this is by far the worst part of the road between Holyhead and Chester: a nearer path was some time since cut along the side of the sea cliff; but a man and horse had lately been killed,

and by order of the commissioners it is now entirely broken up.

The city of St. Asaph is called in British Llan Elwy, on account of its situation at the conflux of the river Elwy with the Clwyd; and St. Asaph by the English, from its patron Asaph, who in the year 560, erected a bishop's see there. The bishop of this diocese has no entire county under his jurisdiction, but parts only of the counties of Flint, Denbigh, Montgomery, Merioneth, and Salop.

The cathedral has since been several times rebuilt; having been burnt in 1402, by Owen Glendwr, it was afterwards restored by Bishop Redman; but, having suffered the dilapidations of time, was lately repaired and beautified under the direction of Mr. William Turner,

The bishop's palace has been entirely rebuilt by the present worthy diocesan, Dr. Bagot.

The beauties of the Vale of Clwyd, which now opens to the eye of the traveller, are surpassed, perhaps not equalled, by ~~any~~ other *vale in the kingdom*. It is probably seen to the greatest advantage from the hills in the neighbourhood of Ruthin. Though near the road to Holywell, you have the best view I think of that fertile and delicious vale: it is of an oval shape, about twenty-five miles in length; and about eight miles wide in its broadest part; it lies open only to the ocean, and to the clearing north wind, being elsewhere guarded with high mountains, which, towards the east especially, are like battlements or turrets; for, by an admirable contrivance of nature, says Camden, the tops of these mountains resemble the

turrets of walls. Upon the whole, however, I think that there are other cultivated scenes in North Wales equal, if not superior. In the Vale of Clwyd, indeed, you have the lively and the beautiful; but in Merioneth, the awful and sublime.

...of which I have not time to
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T O U R

FROM

H O L Y H E A D.

TO

C H E S T E R.

D

T. O. R.

1891

M. O. L. T. H. E. D.

TO

CHESTER

1891

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T O U R

FROM

HOLYHEAD TO CHESTER.

WITHIN two miles of Towyn
y Capel is Holyhead, which
is a small town seated on a noted
and safe harbour: it appears to have
little to boast of, worthy the notice
of the traveller, except the remains of
some Roman walls, which are to
be seen in the church-yard. It is
greatly resorted to by passengers to
and from Ireland, and is the station
of the packets, five of which are

constantly employed, which enliven this otherwise retired place.

Aberfraw, in the island of Anglesea was the seat of Howel Dha, or Howel the Good, Prince of Wales, about the year 940. Here was always kept one of the three copies of the ancient code of laws; a second was kept at Dinevawr, and a third by the doctors of laws.

All traces of its former splendour are effaced. The buildings being in those rude times constructed of timber, accounts for the cause of grandeur which once attracted and commanded notice, being now lost to the eye.

This barren country appears to be ill cultivated and poorly inhabited, though it is presumed the hand of industry might turn it to good account.

At twelve miles from Holyhead is Gwindw. This inn, for comfort and good accommodation, stands unrivalled, perhaps, in all Wales.

At no great distance from Gwindw is the Paris mine, where the greatest quantity of copper ore of any in the kingdom is produced: this body of mineral was discovered in 1763. The greater part of the ore is of good quality, and the vein is thought to be upwards of twenty yards thick, and the length unknown. It is well worthy the attention of any traveller to pay this wonderful source of fortune a visit.

At a small distance from Gwindw on the right, is Plasnewyd, the noble mansion of the Earl of Uxbridge, which is pleasantly situated on the bank of the river, protected on three sides by its own venerable woods. The view of the river is very fine.

and when the vessels are failing, they much enliven the scene. In the woods are some remarkable druidical antiquities, which would, no doubt, much gratify the curious and the lover of antiquity. The house is built in the Gothic style; the prospect of which, in the front, is bounded by the mountains of Caernarvonshire.

The productions of Anglesea, upon the whole, are great; though, unhappily, planting and plantations are but few, and they mostly confined to gentlemen's seats. Dr. Johnson, in his tour to the Hebrides, very much upbraided the Scotch for their oversight in this particular object, and was more than once disposed to be out of temper; as the tree, to be produced, said the Doctor gravely, "requires no

“ other labour but to put the acorn
“ in the earth.”

Were it possible that our forefathers could take a view of this island in its present state, it is not an improbable conjecture whether or not they would be able to trace any vestige of what they once so well knew. Here we lament plantations are wanting: there was a time when its groves were held sacred—such is the solemn defacing hand of Time.

Breathing his native strains,
There the descendant of the British bard
HOEL, or lofty Talieffin, oft,
At the dim twilight hour, in pensive mood,
Amid the silent hall, o'ergrown with briers,
Recalls the festival of old, when blaz'd
The giant oak, and chieftains crown'd with meed.

The road to Bangor Ferry affords a fine view of the British Alps, the mountains of Snowdon; and many

others display a glittering scene of the awful and sublime.

At the distance of five miles to the left is Beaumaris, a small corporate town, neat and well built; one street is upon the whole handsome. The new town-hall and assembly-room, lately built, are great acquisitions to the town—would it were in our power to pass the same commendations upon its trade and commerce.

A more charming situation cannot well be imagined than the beautiful bay of Beaumaris: on one side the Anglesea coast, rising into little hills, and well wooded to the water-side, has a pleasing effect.

Under the direction of Edward the First, in 1295, the castle was founded, which is an elegant structure.

Each of Edward the First's three castles, viz. Caernarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris, differs in form; the latter has the least claim to beauty. The exterior walls are guarded by ten strong round towers; within is a square of 190 feet, or as Mr. Grose expresses it, a square with the corners canted off. The great hall has five windows in front, is 70 feet long, and 23 and a half broad: within the walls, on one side, is a beautiful chapel, the sides ornamented with Gothic arches. A narrow gallery runs within the whole space of the castle walls.

At a small distance from the town, on the shore, stands the remains of the Friars, founded by Prince Llewellyn; it was consecrated by Howel, Bishop of Bangor, who died 1240 (see Leland's Coll.).—This once religious spot, of late became,

by purchase, the property of Lord Bulkeley. At the distance of two miles is the priory of Penmon, once the seat of penitence and prayer, and the resort of pious pilgrims: the remains are the ruins of the refectory and the church; part of the last is in present use. From Baron Hill, the seat of Lord Bulkeley, you have a delightful view of the town and castle of Beaumaris, with the ships that pass from Liverpool to Ireland, together with an extensive prospect, over the sands, of the mountains from the river Conway up to Snowdon. The garden and grounds of his Lordship are laid out with much taste, and display great variety. There is likewise a numerous collection of the Snowdonean plants, well worth the attention of the botanist.

Bangor Ferry is twelve miles from Gwindw, where the traveller will find good accommodation. It was in contemplation, a few years ago, to build a bridge across the Menai, near this place; and Mr. Golborne was consulted upon the practicability of the plan, who gave in an estimate of the expense, to which the Caernarvon people objected, urging it would destroy the navigation of the river. The best time to cross the stream is at low tide; the ferry is perfectly safe, but at times rough and unpleasant, when the wind blows easterly.

About ten miles distance from Bangor is Nantfrankon, a small fertile vale, enclosed between magnificent wild rocks, of uncommon grandeur, and finely broken near their centre. From hence is a noble fall, of water, which, after passing

over the rocks, glides through the vale in the most fanciful windings. the accidental lights which are happily thrown by the interposition of the clouds, on the cavities and masses of rock, produce an awful and sublime effect.

If life were but a transient dream, and man
With active powers endow'd, might unarraign'd
"Lose and neglect the creeping hours," how
ples'd

The bard, by Shakespeare's lay pathetic lull'd,
On *Nantfran's* flowery bank, in sweet neglect
Would lose the summer day!

After climbing over these rude rocks; you reach Ogwar Pool, a very picturesque piece of water, surrounded on one side by rock, on the other by gentle slopes. Large masses of stone which fall from the rocks are happily dispersed in different parts of the water. Many parts near Pool are in the utmost state

of perfection, and for natural wildness not equalled.

Bangor is a small market town, seated between two low hills, in a valley opening to the bay of Beaumaris: it has nothing to strike the eye particularly, though much improved of late years. It is an episcopal see, and boasts of much antiquity.

Willis informs us, that St. Daniel, son of Dynawd, Abbot of Bangor, first established here a college for the instruction of youth, and support of the clergy of those parts. The cathedral was destroyed in 1071, and rebuilt previous to King John's invasion, 1212. The present church is Gothic, and probably was built in the time of Henry the Seventh. It has received considerable improvements by Dr. Warren, Bishop of the diocese

who, with much taste, and great expence, has modernized the old palace. This worthy prelate has much distinguished himself by his munificence and liberality to the neighbouring clergy and poor of his diocese.

Some remains of several Welsh princes, with bishops and deans, lie interred here, who, by their monuments, still speak to the living, and point out the littleness of worldly honours or distinguished titles.

Under the British princes, from the fourth to the seventh century, the monastery of Bangor consisted of between 2000 and 3000 monks, who alternately passed their hours in labour and the offices of devotion.

From hence is an extensive prospect to the east of Beaumaris, the Ormesheads, and Penmaen-mawr

which forms the eastern boundary of the entrance into Beaumaris bay. Cod-fish, salmon, oysters, and many other fish, are in great plenty along the whole Welsh coast; beef, mutton, and lamb, small and sweet. The Welsh mutton has always in London market been considered a rarity, and sells very dear.

At a small distance from Bangor is Llandegai, where the church makes a good figure. It is finely situated on a lofty bank above the Ogwen, and commands a beautiful view; it is a small neat structure, in form of a cross, with the tower in the centre, supported within by four arches. It contains the remains of Archbishop John Williams, a native of Conway.

A little below the church is the village of Aber Cegid, by the side

of a little rivulet, which passes from hence into the sea.

It is supposed a thousand persons find employment here, and that the sale of slates produces nearly twenty thousand pounds *per annum*.

The quarries, from which the slates are taken, lie at a few miles distance, and are the property of Lord Penrhyn, to whose liberal spirit and acknowledged acquaintance with the advantages of society, this country owes particular obligations.

Upon the left hand stands Penrhyn, an ancient house, once beautifully embosomed with venerable oaks. The entrance into the park is through an elegant gateway, resembling a triumphal arch: the situation elevated and pleasant, commanding a pretty view of Anglesea

and the coast of Ireland, and bounded on the other side by the hills of Snowdon.

On the site of the house formerly stood a castle, the residence of Roderic Molwynog, Prince of Wales, who reigned about the year 720. A great wood formerly enclosed the house, which the improving taste of modern times has in a great degree removed. The extensive plantations now made, will, in a short space, change the otherwise dismal aspect of this country, and create a sort of paradise in Wales.

It may not be amiss to inform the antiquarian that the *ancient drinking-horn* is in the possession of this family.

At a little distance we observed a house on the left hand, built in a most happy style of architecture, and sheltered by a flourishing plant-

ation, disposed with great taste, on a spot which was once covered with fragments of rock and stones. Lord Penrhyn's agent has, by laudable efforts, made this otherwise rude spot assume new features, that must attract and charm the traveller.

The river, which was once rugged, and almost unbounded in its course, is now confined within a small compass; and the different heights of the stream form pretty cascades and salmon-leaps, which are seen from the front of the house. The common road, leading over the bridge, crosses the view, which is called Lime Grove.

At the distance of six miles from hence is Aber, a village, with a church, pleasantly situated at the edge of the Lavan Sands. A little up the river from Aber Bridge, is a waterfall, well worthy the attention

of the traveller; the river rushing over a perpendicular rock full 200 feet in height, into a deep pool at the bottom; and after a heavy rain is an object uncommonly grand. Here is also a neat house and a most comfortable stage between Bangor and Conway.

The situation is charming; the pleasing groupe of mountains, swelling one above another, contending as it were for pre-eminence, and at some times covered with snow, rise behind the house, whilst Anglesea displays her shores in the front, richly embellished with gentlemen's seats.

Here formerly stood a castle or palace, belonging to Llewellyn the Great. Some foundations are still to be seen round the summit, which, in digging traces of the building, have been found, and which com-

manded this pass into the mountains. Llewellyn the Great was Prince of North Wales; he married the princess of England, and died in 1240: his coffin is now in the Gwydier chapel at Llanrwst.

Grouse, sea-fowl, and woodcocks, are here in plenty.

As we ride from Aber, over Penmaen-mawr, and up the hill called Sychnant, to Conway, it affords a variety of prospects and rich scenery.

Near this town the rocks of slate again make their appearance, extending to Penmaen-mawr and the rest of the Snowdon chain.

We were particularly pleased to find a dangerous steep precipice had given way to a fine turnpike road, rising in a gradual ascent over the once to be dreaded hill of Penmaen.

This mountain is supposed to be about five hundred yards high; the present road is cut on the side of the hill, probably one hundred yards above the sea. A strong wall is built upon arches to the road to support it, when any defect might appear in the rock. Above which the mountain rises with awful aspect, craggy, bleak, and barren, from whose ragged sides project fragments of great magnitude, almost sufficient to awe the traveller, and spread terror over a mind not accustomed to behold nature in her naked and rugged form.

Until this commodious road was made, to which the nobility and gentry of Ireland largely contributed, persons travelling here were under the necessity to stay till the tide went out, that they might cross the sands under Penmaen-bach; or ride some

miles over a bank of loose gravel, east up by the tide, and ascend Sychnant, rather a steep rugged precipice, to go to Conway, at which place we arrived in the evening.

Conway is a small town, fortified in the ancient style, and its towers and walls are still in good preservation, though much dilapidated. A town more worn by time within, is scarcely to be seen. or a more delightful one without. The situation is on a steep slope to the verge of the river; here a mile broad at high water. The castle was built by Edward I. in the year 1284. A more beautiful fortress perhaps never arose; its form is oblong, placed on all parts on the verge of the precipitous rock; one side is bounded by the river, another by a creek full of water at every tide, and charmingly shaded by hanging woods; the other

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sides face the town. Within the castle is a great hall, 130 feet long by 32 feet broad: the roof lofty, and supported by handsome arches, where the king held his levees.

In the thickness of the wall of one of the towers, is a small elegant recess, with a bow window and a groined ceiling, supported by neat pillars.

From the appearance of these once splendid apartments, of kitchens, cellars, ovens, &c. one may be induced to encourage the idea that the possessors lived in luxury and splendour; still history informs us that King Edward I. gave particular orders that *clean straw* should be put in the king's chamber every week. Comparing our own situation with this august sovereign, how thankful ought we to be for the benefits of civil society and national refinement!

The best view of the superb structure of Conway Castle is, perhaps, from O. Holland, Esq.'s pleasure-ground, though it appears to great advantage from the middle of the stream in a boat.

In the street, not far from the Abbey, is a very old house, with a singular window, and several coats of arms sculptured beneath, one of which is an eagle pouncing a child. This house is called the *College*. It is said that Edward I. took this abbey into his hands, consequently might establish here a place for the instruction of youth.

The trade of Conway is but inconsiderable; it exports a few slates and some copper from the Llandidno mines, and lead and calamine from several mines on the Caernarvon side of the river.

Like a variety of other parts of Great Britain, the mode of travelling through Wales has been much changed of late. Travellers going from Chester to Holyhead for Ireland, were once obliged to take a guide to see them safe over the almost track-mountains in Flintshire and Denbighshire, which is now performed with ease and safety, in less than one-third of the time it formerly took. Wales, in many respects, as to accommodation for travellers, as well as improvement in the roads, within late years, may be reckoned among the first of the kingdom.

Through the arched gateway, at the foot of the town of Conway, Bodfcallen and Dyganwy Castles cannot fail attracting the eye of a stranger in an uncommon manner.

Of the latter castle some small parts still remain; it stands upon a

high rock above the river, and has to boast of having been the residence of the prince of North Wales. Dr. Powell, from the authority of Welsh historians, says it was destroyed by lightning, about the year 816. Camden adds, that he believed it to have been the ancient *Diſtum* under the later emperors. It was rebuilt, and considered as a strong post, about 876. By the same historians we are told it was again restored to consequence by the Earl of Chester in 1098. It was again destroyed by Llewellyn ap Iorwerth, and rebuilt by the Earl of Chester in 1209. King John made a disgraceful retreat with his army from this place in 1211. On the top of a low hill, near Bryniau, is an ancient tower worth inspecting.

At a small distance, upon an eminence, stand Marl and Bodscallen;

the former was destroyed by fire a few years back; the latter is one of the seats of the late Sir Roger Mostyn, the respectable knight of the shire of Flint. It is a place of great antiquity, being mentioned in the Record of Caernarvon, but was inhabited in far earlier times. The situation is fine, amidst surrounding woods, and commands a beautiful view. Gloddaeth is another seat of the Mostyns, placed on the slope of a very extensive hill or lime-stone rock, clothed with successful plantations, commanding a beautiful and extensive prospect. The walks may be considered among those of the first rate in this island.

A great part of the present house was built by Tho. Mostyn, Esq; in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In the library is a beautiful copy of the first and second books of *Froissart*, a

MS. on vellum, with illuminations: the frontispiece represents the author on his knees, presenting his book to Edward the Third. (See Pennant.)

The face of the country here puts on a more agreeable form, planting and agriculture being considerably encouraged.

The distance from Conway Ferry to Abergele is ten miles. In many parts the road is confined, rough, and incommodious; but the very dangerous precipice of Penmaen Rhos no longer remains to terrify the traveller; the road is on the back part of the hill.

From hence you pass by Gwrch; on the right hand is a mountain of limestone, which it is thought cannot be exhausted: great quantities are shipped to Liverpool and other places.

“ Not far from this place the ill-fated Richard the Second was trea-

cherously betrayed into the hands of his enemy Bolingbroke, and carried prisoner to the castle of Flint. There are antique drawings of the unfortunate monarch's captivity at Conway, and of his interview with the usurper at Flint Castle, in the curious collection of Strutt's Regal Antiquities."

The land here is fertile, and produces good corn, the valuable manure, lime, being at hand, and which is pretty much used in these parts.

Abergele is a small town on the edge of Ruddlan Marsh, much frequented in the summer season as a bathing-place, and has also some considerable fairs for cattle.

We were glad to find the road to Chester was not, as formerly, over this marsh, which was always more or less uncomfortable.

The castle of Rhuddlan was built in its present manner by Henry the Second, 1157, and stands a noble object on the left, at the mouth of the river Clwyd. It is built of red stone; the present ruins consist of a square area, surrounded by a strong wall, which you enter by a gateway between two round towers; at the opposite corner are also two round towers with a small gate; at each of the other angles is a round tower, and the whole encircled with a ditch, faced on each side with stone. King Edward the First held his parliament here; the parliament house still remains. Powell says that Rhuddlan Marsh is celebrated for the battle fought there in 795, between the Saxons and Welsh, when their monarch, Caradoc, fell in the conflict.

The famous King of Mercia, it is said, was slain here also, but the Saxon Chronicles place his death the year before that battle.

From Abergele you ascend the hill to the pleasant village of St. George, which affords a good prospect of the surrounding country.

Mr. Hughes, one of the fortunate proprietors of the copper mine at Paris mountain, lately purchased Kimmil house, and has now built an elegant mansion near this pleasant site. Sir Edward Lloyd has also built a neat elegant house near the same place. A short ride from hence brought us to St. Asaph, a small town and bishop's see, built on a steep side of a hill, and claims considerable antiquity. (See page 45 for an account of this place.)

Proceeding from hence, at a few miles distance from Holywell, a

little to the left of the road, we discovered Downing, the residence of Mr. Pennant, the British historian and naturalist, a gentleman whose extensive writings have been universally admired, as well as his private virtues.

Downing is situated in a small valley; the house is built of stone, and has a very pretty appearance; the grounds are laid out with much taste, and covered with fine timber, descending in a gentle slope to the banks of the Dee. Mr. Pennant has a valuable library, with a large collection of beautiful drawings, &c.

From an eminence in the road, we had a good view of the broad estuary of the Dee, marked by many a mile of bare sand that is covered at high water; also large woods, which give shelter and beauty to Mostyn Hall.

Holywell is ten miles from St. Asaph, now a considerable market-town in North Wales, and very populous. On the side of the hill, stands the famous well of *Saint Winifrede*, whose spring almost exceeds credibility, as it is calculated to throw up *twenty-one tons of Water every minute*, and is certainly the finest in these kingdoms. In times of Romish superstition, history acquaints us that this was the resort of pious and noble pilgrims, who had great faith in its miraculous healing powers; and if we cast our eyes up to the arched roof above the well, ample testimony now remains, that some, even in our own days, have experienced the efficacy of its virtues; one instance of which comes within present memory. I well remember, when a schoolboy, wantonly teasing a poor man, who had, by a severe cold, lost the use of

his *limbs*, and had two *crutches*. The expense of his maintenance many years on the parish, at last induced the overseers to send him to Holywell, to try the effects of that surprising *Well*; and however singular it may appear, before two months had elapsed, he returned, leaving one crutch behind. The next season he renewed his visit, and came home with a stick, leaving his other crutch; since which period he has provided for himself, without the alms of the parish. Bishop Fleetwood has written a volume on the legend of St. Winifrede, whose head being cut off by Prince Cradocus, we are told was miraculously reunited by the holy prayers of St. Bruno. It is said the spring of water instantly flowed from the spot to which the head rolled.

During the reign of pilgrimages, nothing but a corn-mill or two, the

property of monks, found employ for this beneficial stream—How great the contrast now! Here are several manufactories of considerable importance, belonging to the cotton twist company, which, while they render the stream less tranquil, afford employment to hundreds of poor people, in both the town and neighbourhood. There is little doubt but that this town will, in a few years, be by far the greatest in Wales; the inhabitants are now calculated to be 5396 souls.

Upon the stream of the said well is the copper and brass work which supplies the principle of motion to the great variety of mechanical force here employed. The works belonging to the Anglesea companies are, in fact a continuation of the same processes that are carried on at the Paris mountain. The works oc-

cupy a large extent of ground. The refined copper is received from Swansea, &c. in solid blocks or pigs, then passes between large iron rollers, which reduce it to a thickness to be applied to a variety of purposes. Here are likewise corn-mills worked by this stream; and the banks are likely to be covered with works partaking of its benefits down to the level of the sea, which is a mile in length. Here is likewise a small coin of halfpenny and penny pieces in circulation, with the Druid's head stamped upon them, and made current by the company. Above the well stands the church, dedicated to St. Winifrede; a little beyond which is a hill called Bryn Castle, which is narrow and rather steep on the sides, projecting at the end over the little valley. It is rather singular that in Doomsday-book

no mention is made of either the chapel, church, or well, though townships of less note are named, such as Brumford, &c. The town of Holywell, at the beginning of the present century, was very inconsiderable; the houses, in most part, thatched, the streets unpaved, and even destitute of a market.

The ancient abbey of Basingwerk, which stands beside the town, is highly deserving of notice. This was, in the reigns of Henry the Second and Edward the First, a place of much note, as the abbots held their parliament here, and discharged other public duties.

The ride from Holywell to Halkin, and from thence to Northop, will, no doubt, much gratify the traveller; it commands an extensive view across the river, of the distant hills of Lancashire, and of Worrall

and Parkgate on the opposite side. In the distance of ten miles there are few places that will afford greater variety of prospect.

Dear scene ! that stretch'd between the silver arms
Of Deva and of Mersey, meets the main,
And when the sun-gilt day illumines its charms,
Boasts of peculiar grace, nor boasts in vain.

MISSE SEWARD.

The country round this place is well wooded, and, upon the whole, in a high state of cultivation.

Near to Halkin are Lord Grosvenor's valuable lead mines.

Northop is a neat country village, the church of which makes a good appearance: this township was held after the conquest by R. Rhuddlan. The roads in this neighbourhood have received considerable repair; some bridges have likewise been erected, and the hills lessened, so as

to make them more commodious to the traveller. Upon the flat below, at the foot of the river Dee, is Flint, a town and castle which will be mentioned hereafter, in the tour from Shrewsbury to Flint.

Harwarden is five miles from Northop, a small clean town. The castle, the property of Sir S. Glynne, forms a picturesque object, soaring above the woods: this fortress, it is said, very frequently changed its masters, being sometimes in possession of the English, and at other times recovered by the Welsh. In the unfortunate reign of Charles the First, this castle suffered the fate of many others, as its broken towers fully evince. General Mytton took it in 1645. Camden informs us that on the conquest this castle was comprehended in the vast grant made to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester. In

1264, Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, had a conference at this place with Simon de Montfort, the Earl of Leicester, when they established peace between Cheshire and Wales.

There are now but small remains of this fortress; a round tower appears to be preserved with care, whilst the other parts present a mournful picture of decay. A little below the castle, on a delightful spot of ground, is the noble mansion of the late Sir John Glynne, which stands a conspicuous object beside the road, built under his direction, now the residence of his grandson, Sir Stephen Glynne. Sir John, with laudable foresight, made large plantations in and about the place, converting what was but an unprofitable waste, into a flourishing wood.

In the centre of the town is the rectory, the residence of the Rev. Mr. Crew. A more charming situation cannot well be conceived; and what is equally as desirable, a better living, which, we are informed, owes its increase, in a ten-fold degree, to the large enclosures of Saltney Marsh, an extent of land of many hundred acres. This marsh was, a few years back, dangerous to pass, particularly in winter, when a considerable part was flooded. There is now a good turnpike road, and cultivation and fertility smile on the traveller. There are in this neighbourhood many coal-pits, which afford employment to a numerous poor who journey with their asses laden to Chester, knitting as they walk beside them, setting a laudable example of industry to the sluggard and the beggar. Quitting this marsh,

which is about three miles over, we ascended a rising ground, which soon brought us to the city of Chester.

Distances in the foregoing Tour.

	Miles.
From Holyhead to Gwyndw -	12
To Bangor-Ferry	12
To Conway -	17
To Abergele -	10
To St. Asaph -	8
To Holywell, -	10
To Chester -	18
Total	87

T O U R

FROM

CHESTER TO LLANGOLLEN,

WELSH POOL, and MONMOUTH;

WITH THE

DISTANCES DESCRIBED.

T O U R

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T O U R
FROM
CHESTER TO LLANGOLLEN
AND
MONMOUTH.

IT may probably afford some amusement to the traveller to lay before him a short description of the city of Chester.

This ancient and pleasant city stands upon the borders of the river Dee, on the west side of the county. Its lat. 53 deg. 15 min. north; and long. 3 deg. 2 min. west from London; its distance from the latter city being 182 miles.

There are perhaps few cities in Europe, which have a stronger claim

to general attention than Chester: the eye of the stranger will here find an ample field for admiration; the man of taste, who may honour it with a visit, will not depart ungratified; nor will the antiquarian search in vain for some rich and profitable treasures of investigation within its walls.

The inhabitants of Chester may be said to enjoy advantages which no other place of equal magnitude can boast of; peculiarly favoured by Providence, the situation is as pleasing as the air is salubrious,

The present degree of population is said to be about 15,000 souls, and (although not fortunate enough to be the seat of any particular or staple manufacture) is yet increasing. A stranger, on his first entrance into the city, might suppose that it is but thinly inhabited, the

enveloped situation of the shops, which are mostly covered by rows, tending to hide a considerable portion of people from the eye. Mr. Pennant, whose respectability as a tourist is of the first rank, very concisely describes it in the following words:

"The city is of a square form, which evinces the origin to have been Roman, being in the figure of their camps, with four gates facing the four points, four principal streets, and a variety of lesser, crossing the others at right angles, dividing the whole into lesser squares. The walls are built on a soft freestone rock, high above the circumjacent country;" and are said to have been built by the Mercian Lady Ethelfleda.

"The structure of the four principal streets is without parrallel;

“ they run direct from east to west,
“ and north to south, and were excavated out of the earth, and sunk many feet beneath the surface:
“ the carriages are driven far below the level of the kitchens, on a line with ranges of shops, over which passengers walk in galleries, which the inhabitants call the Rows, secure from wet or heat.
“ In the Rows are likewise ranges of shops,” and steps to descend into the street.

The exploring hand of time has, at different periods, presented to the antiquarian some valuable treasures:—among these is a Roman altar, now in the possession of Mr. Dyson, erected by Flavius Longus, tribune of the victorious 20th legion, and his son Longinus, in honour of the Emperors Dioclesian and Maximinian.

In the 24th year of the present century, the remains of the illustrious Hugh Lupus (first Earl of Chester) were discovered in the chapter-house of the cathedral, incased with stone; where the body had lain, in undisturbed security, upwards of 600 years.

Here it was the Caledonian King, Malcolm IV. (in 1159) ceded to our second Henry all the lands that the fortunes of war had wrested from the crown of England.

Chester was the favourite city of Richard II. who honoured it with his presence in 1397; and two years after he was lodged a close prisoner in the castle, which had been seized into the hands of our fourth Henry, who cancelled the lives of several of Richard's adherents and favourites. It has also at several succeeding periods been honoured with the pre-

sence of royalty ; in 1459, Henry VI. with Queen Margaret and her son Edward, paid a visit here ; and in 1493 Henry VII. and his consort graced the city with their presence. King William visited Chester ; and, during the reign of this monarch, it was remarkable for having a coinage of silver currency.

A stranger who has never had the felicity of viewing the city walls, can entertain but a very faint idea of the convenience and pleasure which they afford : their circumference is one mile, three quarters, and a hundred and one yards.

This valuable walk had its origin probably in *warefare*, being evidently intended as fortifications in days less tranquil than the present. That potent warrior *Time*, has, however, razed its towers, insomuch that only one remains to perpetuate the

hostile æra in which it was erected. This is known by the name of the Phœnix Tower, a situation remarkable for being the place where King Charles I. retired to see the battle of Rowton Moor, where his army, under Sir Marmaduke Langdale, was defeated by General Pointz.

Thus this beautiful walk, the offspring of *war*, is now solely devoted to the purposes of *pleasure* and salubrious enjoyment.

The views which the walls command are various and extensive, enriched with enlivening scenes, variegated landscapes, and delightful prospects; particularly that part leading down to the Water Tower, as it is called: WALES, from this point, opens the bosom of her country as far as the naked eye can discover. Flintshire and Denbighshire, with their majestic mountains apparently touch-

ing the horizon, have a noble effect, and highly animate the scene. In short, no walk can be better calculated, either for health or pleasure, than the walls of Chester.

Three very handsome and spacious arches, at the east, west, and south entrances, have been all finished within these few years* (the two latter very recently); and nothing remains but the erection of a similar arch at the north, to complete an uniformity much wanted.

The stately cathedral stands on the east side of Northgate-street; the reigns of Henry VI. VII. and VIII. are mentioned as the periods in which the greater part of this sacred edifice (now remaining) was erected. Simon Ripley, chosen abbot in 1485, built the broad aisle. The abbey, which gave birth to this see, was of such antiquity as to have been a

nunnery more than eleven hundred years ago, founded by Wulpherus, king of the Mercians, for his daughter, St. Werburgh.

The neatness of the choir, and the Gothic appearance of the tabernacle work, have a pleasing effect on the eye. The bishop's throne, which is superbly ornamented, is said to have been the ancient shrine of St. Werburgh. It is encircled by a beautiful group of small images, intended to represent saints and kings of Mercia. On the north side of the broad aisle are the cloisters, in which is that beautiful well-finished edifice, the Chapter House, where the bones of several earls and abbots lie in peaceful security; it is fifty feet in length, twenty-six in width, and thirty-five in height. The supposition is, that it was erected by Randal Maschines, Earl of Chester,

who died in 1128. In the cloisters is a flight of steps, which led to those *sanctified* retreats, the *dormitory*, *kitchen*, and *cellars* of the venerable monks. There are eight other churches, some of which might gratify the curious, particularly St. John's.

The walk on the New River bank, which extends more than three miles in length, has been particularly admired.

The new canal, just finished, from this city to Eastam a distance of about ten miles, drives a considerable trade from opening a communication between this place and the commercial town of Liverpool.

The castle has of late years undergone considerable alteration and repair, and may be well worth the attention of the traveller. The river Dee meanders beautifully beside the

town, and at about the distance of five miles embraces the main ocean, near Parkgate.

Passing through Chester, a little on the left of the road, near Belgrave, is the seat of the ancient and respectable family of the Grosvenors; the ride may be taken immediately past his Lordship's house, along the extensive park side, returning into the high road at Belgrave. About three miles farther is Marford Hill, which for extent of prospect, is scarcely surpassed; from this place, Cheshire looks, as it has often been described, the *Garden of England*, being well supplied with wood in every part, and adorned by the richest cultivation.

Bolsworth castle and the Peckforten Hills greatly enrich the scene; and, if the weather is fine, a con-

siderable part of Lancashire and Derbyshire may be seen from this point.

A little beyond Marford is the pleasant village of Gresford. The church is situated on the brow of a lofty eminence, over a beautiful little valley, whose end opens into the vast expanse of the Vale Royal of Chester. The church is a handsome building:—there are also some monuments of antiquity in it. The bells have been denominated one of the *wonders of Wales*; for sweetness and harmony they are allowed to exceed any in that quarter. This may be attributed to the echo of the vale below, which reverbrates the sound, and often gives the effect of a double sound.

In the sequestered vale adjoining Gresford, is the cottage of Mrs. W. of Chester; its simplicity and

beauty have tempted many travellers to view the scene, few of whom ever felt regret at having deviated from the common path. It is here that contemplation may retire within herself, and for a moment forget the world and its follies; while virtue delights to meet her retired associate.

About a mile on the side Wrexham, to the left of the road, is Acton, the seat of Sir F. Cluniffe. The garden is beautifully laid out, but the prospect confined. The venerable grove, leading to the house, near half a mile in extent, has a noble appearance. To the right of the road from hence to Wrexham, there are several respectable houses, whose gardens display taste and judgment in an abundant degree.

Wrexham is a handsome and well-built town, surrounded with an enclosed and fertile country. The

church is large, and was erected in the reign of Henry the Seventh. The tower is 140 feet high, and is a beautiful specimen of the florid or reformed Gothic, which taste began to prevail about the time of that king, when the windows were made broader, and less pointed at the top, their arches being more rounded at their springs, and ending with an obtuser angle.

Amongst other monuments that reflect high credit on the sculptor, and catch the eye of the traveller who may view this church, is that of Mrs. Mary Middleton, by Roubilliac, on which Miss Seward in her verses on Wrexham, says :

Bright as in Albion's long-distinguish'd fanes,
Within these holy walls, she lives, she reigns ;
Her *fainted maid*, amid the bursting tomb,
Hears the *last trumpet* thrill ; its murky gloom,
With smile triumphant over *death* and time
Lifts the rapt eye, and rears the form sublime.

I believe there are few persons who have visited Wrexham without taking a ride to Erthig, about two miles from thence, the seat of P. York, Esq; a place where nature has been lavish of beauties, and excellently improved by the hand of art. The gardens are very extensive, and a great display of taste and judgment may be discovered throughout the whole. Perhaps Wales cannot boast of a more elegant spot. The house is a modern handsome building.

Not far distant from Wrexham is Offa's Dyke, which is very visible on each side the road: it was thrown up by order of Offa, King of the Mercians, in the eighth century, as a boundary between his and the British territories. This dyke began at Basingwerk in Flintshire, and ended at Chepstow, being a line of more than 150 miles.

On the left hand of the road, near Ruabon, is the splendid mansion of Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, which has been long revered by that town and neighbourhood for the hospitality of its owner. The park is very extensive, and the ride to the house picturesque and delightful : the building is modern.

Ruabon is but a small town, and affords no novelty or interest for the curious traveller.

Llangollen is a town romantically situated in a small dale, closely environed with mountains, which are finely varied with woods, rocks, and torrents. On the point of one of them just above the town, are the ruins of the castle Dinas Brân, commonly called Crow Castle, situated on a steep rising hill of considerable height commanding a fine view of the vale ; the distance terminated by a noble range

of mountains gradually receding from before the eye; then they are lost in the distant azure. This celebrated spot was once inhabited by the lovely Lady *Mifanwy Vechan*, of the house of Tudor Trevor. She was beloved by the bard *Hoel*.

Gray speaking of the massacre among the bards, in the time of Edward the First, describes this scene, as,

Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born HOEL's harp, or soft Llewellyn's
lay."

Dinas Brân Castle and Llangollen Vale have obtained further poetical encomiums in the poems of *Sotbeby* and *G. Cumberland*; indeed there have scarcely any historians or poets lived in any period that have not paid a tribute of praise to this lovely vale. It has been universally allowed by gentlemen of distinguish-

ed taste, that Llangollen may rank in picturesque beauty with either Italy, Spain, or Switzerland.

The beautiful cottage of the Right Hon. Lady *E. Butler*, and Miss *Ponsonby*, is situate in this vale, a quarter of a mile from the town of Llangollen. This picturesque retreat comprises, in an extent of little more than two acres, every rural grace. Woods and mountains rise magnificently around it, but not too near to destroy that air of lightness and comfort which it breathes.

These ladies have rather chosen to make this secluded spot their abode, than to mingle in the gay scenes of life, setting an example of all that is elegant in manners, and lovely in virtue, to the surrounding inhabitants.

The Rev. Mr. Roberts of Denbren has lately added largely to his

paternal house, situated on a noble mountain in this vale; the house stands near its craggy summit, and looks as if it had been scooped out of the rocks.

In this vale also is the beautiful and celebrated ruin of *Valley Crucis Abbey*, situated amidst a surrounding landscape of woods and mountains, sublime and awfully impressive.

“ This house, the habitation of the monks, was dissolved in 1235, and is said to be the first of the Welsh that underwent that fate: it remained in the crown till the 9th of James the First, who granted it to Edward Wotton. There still remain the ruins of the church, and part of the abbey; the last inhabited by a farmer. The church was built in the form of a cross, in different styles of architecture. The most ancient is that of the east

end, where the windows are in form of long narrow slips, pointed at top. The window at the west end is large, divided by stone tracery; and above is a round window of elegant work. The abbot's apartment was contiguous to the church; there opens from it a small space, where he might stand to hear the holy offices performed below. The lower part of the abbey is vaulted, and supported by rows of low pillars, now divided into different rooms. In front is a large window, with curious stone tracery, which reaches to the ground. Within seems to have stood a small stair-case which led to the frater, a paved room above the arches."—See Mr. Pennant's History.

The river Dee is a noble object as seen from the bridge at Llangollen: it rages furiously down the broad, shelving, solid rock, which is worn

to a kind of glossy polish by the waters of this considerable river sinking at once into one channel, scarcely a yard broad, and of unfathomable depth, leaving the rest of the bed of the river, composed of massy and pointed rock, entirely dry, except in large floods. The concentrated stream foams with velocity through a single arch of the bridge.

“ About a quarter of a mile higher up the vale, we meet with the remainder of a round column, called the Pillar of Elifeg, perhaps one of the most ancient of any British inscribed pillars now existing. It was entire till the civil wars of the last century, when it was thrown down and broken by some ignorant fanatics, who thought it had too much the appearance of a cross to be suffered to stand. The pillar has been a sepulchral cross, and folly and superstition paid

it the usual honours: it was a memorial of the dead; an improvement on the rude columns of druidical times, and cut in form, and surrounded with inscriptions. It is said that the stone when complete, was twelve feet high; it is now reduced to six feet eight inches." See Mr. PENNANT.

We now ascended the long narrow ridge of a mountain, which soon brought us within sight of Chirk Castle.

The ancient outward walls and towers of this castle still remain, but the court or quadrangle has at different times been made habitable: the apartments range all around it; and the principle suite of rooms are grand, and handsomely fitted up in the modern fashion.

Chirk Castle was founded by Roger Mortimer, in the thirteenth cen-

tury, who usurped large possessions in this country from his Welsh ward. It stands on a lofty eminence, commanding a rich and extensive view over part of the counties of Cheshire and Shropshire, and nearly in the centre of a park, which the proprietor, Mr. Middleton, has now levelled and formed to the present taste.

From hence a melancholly ride, over a lonesome, mountainous heath, will lead into the vale of Llanrhaidr.

From Llanrhaidr it may be worth while to ride along the bank of the river, on the north side for nearly five miles, to see the noble cataract, called by way of eminence *Pistill Rhaidr*: *Rhaidr* means a cataract, and the river is so called on account of the rapidity of its torrent; *Pistill* signifies a water-spout.

On our approach towards it, neither the size of the river, nor the first view of the fall, which we saw at the distance of two miles, gave us any idea answerable to our expectations; but as we advanced, a noble theatre of naked perpendicular rock opened its grand semicircle to our sight: in the middle of it fell the Pistill Rhaidr, in a large body of water, from the amazing height of two hundred and forty feet.

Powis Castle stands about a mile above the town: the gardens are laid out in extensive parallel terraces, hanging over each other, in the taste introduced by King William, and bordered with fantastic yews, and other formal evergreens.

The castle is still inhabited, but has more the appearance of a long-neglected mansion, than that of a comfortable house.

We crossed the Severn about two miles from Welsh Poole, over a long narrow bridge, and soon reached the neat little town of Montgomery.

On our approach to it, the town, and the castle above, situated on a high rock, the side of which, towards the town, is thinly chequered with trees, presented a very picturesque view.

Leaving Montgomery, we soon descended into a beautiful valley, diversified with the Severn meadows and pastures, and bounded on each side of the river with moderate hills, generally mantled with wood.

There are no remains of the castles of Delevorn and Caerfuse, in the vicinity of Newtown; the intrenchment of the first appeared to us, from the opposite side of the Severn, in our road through the valley.

The houses are here generally framed with timber, and the intermediate parts are fenced from the weather with laths and plaster.

Newtown is built in this manner, which in other respects, is a neat town, agreeably situated on the Severn's bank, at the extremity of the valley before described.

Four miles carried us to the summit of a mountain, the ascent to which begins at Newtown: the path over this mountain is intricate and boggy; but we were fortunate enough to find it, though the disagreeable uncertainty of being in the right track preyed upon our spirits for many miles. We afterwards dipped into two or three Radnorshire dales, and arrived at Llandrindod.

We had many views of old intrenchments from this route; but they afforded a small relief to the te-

dioufness of crawling through vile roads and a melancholy waste.

The Wells of Llandrindod are situated in a wild extensive heath, some spots of which are rarely enlivened with a few trees and small cultivated enclosures. The mountains bound the dreary prospect at a distance.

The lodging-house is tolerably contrived for the reception of company, and in a fine summer, is frequently full.

We crossed the Wye at Builth, which brought us into Brecknockshire.

Builth is a small town, situated in a broad and pleasant plain; it was in this neighbourhood that Prince Llewellyn, was slain in a wood, after a desperate contest between the British and English forces, at a bridge upon

the river Yrvon, wherein the former at length were entirely routed.

We passed through Builth on a market-day, and our ride through the crowds in the street was attended with some difficulty. It at first amazed us to see the fulness of these weekly meetings in such little towns, as they appeared more like large fairs than common markets. We could scarcely conceive, from the general wildness of the country, that it could have possibly produced such numerous assemblies.

From Builth we rode over another long, lonesome, and boggy mountain. The geographer Speed gives the following description of this mountain :

“ The ancient inhabitants and possessors of this shire, with the rest in this south tract, were the Silures much spoken of, and great

" opposites to the Romanes, whose
" countries were first made subject
" by Julius Frontinus, who, besides
" the valour of the enemy, had to
" struggle with the mountaines and
" straits, as Tacitus tells us; nei-
" ther any more hard, we may well
" say, than they of this shire;
" whereof one in the south, and
" three miles from Brecknock, is
" such height and operation, as is
" incredible: and were it not that
" I have witnesse to affirme what I
" shall speak, I should blush to let
" the report thereof passe from my
" pen."

" From the top of that
" hill, in the Welch called Mouch
" Denny, or Cadier Arthur (Arthur's
" Chair), they had oftentimes cast
" from them, and downe the north-
" east rocke, their cloakes, hats, and

“ staves, which notwithstanding
“ would never fall, but were with
“ the aire and winde still returned
“ backe, and blowne up: neither,
“ said they, will any thing descend
“ from that cliffe being so cast, un-
“ less it be stone, or some metalline
“ substance; affirming the cause to
“ be the clouds, which are seen to
“ racke much lower than the top of
“ that hill:” from which we de-
scended into a pleasant valley, and
good turnpike road, above five miles
from Brecknock.

Brecknock is a large handsome
town, situated on a fine rising above
the Uſke. The streets are well
paved; and it is a place of confi-
derable extent, containing some very
good houses; and the residence of
many of the first families in the
country, which is rather unusual for
a country town: the cause assigned

is that Brecknockshire being very mountaneous and uncultivated, and almost destitute of villages that could supply the tables of the gentry, such as have not estates, or houses in the few rich vales of this county, are obliged to resort hither for convenience and society.

From Brecknock we turned out of the high road to a village, where are the ruins of several Roman edifices, and the remains of one hot and two cold baths; the hypocaust, or subterraneous stove, by which the former was heated, being almost entire; within a few yards is a tessellated pavement, in tolerable preservation; but the dies are uncommonly small, and the colours very faint. The ground for some distance is strewn with Roman bricks and tiles, several of them having the impression of letters.

The Sugar-leaf Hill, so called from its conical shape, is a remarkable high mountain, in the vicinity of Abergavenny; and a very conspicuous and striking object from the high lands of Gloucestershire, which are distant more than seventy miles.

The turnpike now follows the current of the Uske, being commonly within view of it, through a delicious vale, which is diversified with pastures, woods, and mountains; the lands are wholly cultivated to the best advantage, and are well inhabited, rich, and beautiful.

The environs of Abergavenny, in Monmouthshire, are rich and beautiful, and, like the rest of the vale from Brecknock, abound with the most charming variety of landscape. The prospects are terminated at proper distances with mountains, among which, at the opposite sides of the

town, Skirid vawr and Blorench raise their conspicuous heads.

The town has a few good houses scattered in it, but in general the streets are narrow, ill paved, and ill built. Some of the walls, and part of the tower on the keep, are the only remains of a once flourishing Norman castle.

Just above the little parish of Lanfrewi, four miles below Llantony, is a remarkable mountain, the sides of which have at different times been broken from it, and now lie in immense fragments underneath, having left a long perpendicular precipice more than 100 feet high.

We could learn no particulars about these separations of the rock, though, from the apparent freshness of some of the fallen pieces, the last does not seem to be very ancient.

We crossed the Ufke, and pursued our route to Pontypoole, which you enter over Pontymoill, a bridge of one arch, with the park-lodge on one side, backed by a beautiful hanging wood. Pontypool is a clean town, rendered famous by its manufactory of japanned ware. The houses are of stone, whitewashed, covered with slate stone, the river Avon running rapidly on one side of the street, turning in its course several mills. Pontypool park and house, belonging to Capel Hanbury Esq. adds much to the beauty of the town. There are several very valuable iron forges on the banks of the small river Avon, which runs at the foot of Pontypool; and the neighbouring hills contain abundance of excellent coal, which is disposed of at the pit for three-pence per horse-load, or two hundred weight; and it

may be conceived that the cheapness and proximity of this article are very advantageous to the iron manufacturers, and point out the eligibility of their situation.

At the distance of seven or eight miles from hence is Caerlion; whose ancient and indisputable splendour is not attested by any existing monuments: there are no vestiges to be seen of the superb buildings, the spacious amphitheatre, and numerous baths, that were constructed by the Romans towards the close of the first century, when Caerleon became a place of consequence, as the station, or head-quarters of the second legion, commanded by Julius Frontinus; but so lately as five or six years ago, there remained near the present town the defences of a strong camp, consisting of a deep ditch, and a lofty mound or rampart, which had been

since levelled, and the ground is now in a state of cultivation: but it may be disputed, whether these fortifications were of Roman, Saxon, or British construction; as it is recorded that Caerlion was defended for some time by a garrison of Saxons, against the attacks of Prince Arthur, to whose victorious arms it was, however, eventually surrendered; and *here* that renowned British monarch was crowned, and kept his court.

The country between Pontypool and Monmouth is generally well cultivated, and rather pleasing; yet did not appear to us so strikingly beautiful as it had been represented: but, perhaps, the enchanting prospects in the vicinity of Brecknock, with which we had so recently been charmed, might occasion an apathy to scenes less attractive of admiration.

In our way to Monmouth we passed through Uske, where is a small castle; the town is watered by the river of the same name, which runs from hence to Newport, and empties itself into the Bristol Channel, a little below the town.

The country still continues to wear the same rich dress as about Abergavenny, even to Monmouth, with this difference only, that it is now more enlarged and unconfined with mountains.

Ragland Castle, which lies partly in the road, is a magnificent ruin; the magnitude of it, and the large remains, are uncommonly striking,

This castle was built by Sir W. Thomas, and his son William, Earl of Pembroke, beheaded at Banbury. It came into the noble family of Worcester by Sir Charles Somerset's marrying Elizabeth, the grandchild

of the said William Earl of Pembroke, heir to his son William Earl of Huntingdon, and heir-general to all the Herberts in England. This Sir Charles Somerfet was the first Earl of Worcester of this line.

Camden calls Ragland a fair house of the Earl of Worcester's, built castle-like.

The extensive outworks were added by the Marquis of Worcester, in the civil wars; and he fortified them in such a manner that he was enabled to hold Ragland, for King Charles, till his imprisonment at Holmby.

This castle had the honour of being the last which surrendered to the all-powerful forces of the Parliament.

It is greatly to the honour of the Duke of Beaufort, the proprietor of this castle, that he has endeavoured

to preserve from destruction all the remains of religious and military architecture, of which he is the possessor.

Tintern abbey, Chepstow and Ragland castles, all in this county, are instances of his laudable veneration for antiquity, which deservedly excites the gratitude of every curious traveller, who must often lament in his Welsh tour, that this noble example is too rarely imitated.

The following portrait of Welsh hospitality and manners, gives an excellent specimen of the magnificence of those days.

List of the Household, and Method of living at RAGLAND CASTLE, by the Earl of WORCESTER, in the Reign of CHARLES I. 1641.

At eleven o'clock in the forenoon the castle gates were shut, and the

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1641
212 years

tables laid; two in the dining-room; three in the hall; one in Mrs. Watson's apartment, where were the chaplain's (Sir Toby Mathews being the first); and two in the housekeeper's room, for the ladies' women.

The Earl entered the dining-room, attended by his gentlemen.

As soon as he was seated, Sir Ralph Blackstone, steward of the house, retired. The comptroller, Mr. Holland, attended with his staff; as did the sewer, Mr. Blackburne; the daily waiters, Mr. Clough, Mr. Selby, Mr. Scudamore; and many gentlemen's sons with estates, from two to seven hundred pounds a year, who were bred up in the castle: my lady's gentlemen of the chamber, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Fox.

At the first table sat the noble family, and such of the nobility as came there.

At the second table in the dining-room, sat knights and honourable gentlemen attended by footmen.

In the hall at the first table sat Sir Ralph Blackstone, steward; the comptroller, Mr. Holland; the secretary; the master of the horse, Mr. Dolowar; the master of the fishponds, Mr. Andrews; my Lord Herbert's preceptor, Mr. Adams; with such gentlemen as came there under the degree of a knight, attended by footmen, and plentifully served with wine.

At the second table in the hall (served from my Lord's table, and with other hot meats) sat the sewer, with the gentlemen waiters and pages, to the number of twenty-four.

At the third table in the hall, sat the clerk of the kitchen, with the yeomen officers of the house, two grooms of the chamber, &c.

Other officers of the household, were, chief auditor, Mr. Smith, clerk of the accounts, George Whit-horn; purveyor of the castle, Mr. Salisbury; usher of the hall, Mr. Moyle and Mr. Cooke; closet-keeper; gentleman of the chapel, Mr. Davies; keeper of the records; master of the Wardrobe; master of the armoury; master grooms of the stable for the war-horses, twelve; master of the hounds; master falconer; porter and his man.

Two butchers; two keepers of the home park; two keepers of the red deer park.

Footmen, grooms, and other menial servants, to the number of 150.

Some of the footmen were brewers and bakers.

Out-Officers.

Steward of Ragland, William Jones, Esq.

The governor of Chepstow castle, Sir Nicholas Kemys, Bart.

Housekeeper of Worcester House, in London, James Redman, Esq.

Thirteen bailiffs.

Two counsel for the bailiffs to have recourse to.

Solicitor, Mr. John Smith.

This once magnificent castle is now in ruins, but the remains of it are well worth the observation of travellers. Among other parts now standing is a flight of steps, which appear ready to fall, yet so curiously put together as to be ascended without danger; part of

the hall is standing, and presents to the view, a beautiful picture of ancient architecture.

The country is highly cultivated, and the views are generally very pleasing between Ragland and Monmouth. The latter place makes a good appearance, is a large and handsome town, and well inhabited by gentry. It stands on the banks of the serpentine Wye; but that river, though almost constantly pleasing, and ornamental to the circumjacent country, is not, however, so charming or so romantic here as at Chepstow. The bridge is of stone, and has six irregular arches.

The town takes its name from the conflux of the Wye and Mynwe, generally pronounced Monnow. Burton, in his History of Wales, informs us, that the priory

was founded by William Jones.—
 The church is a handsome structure,
 its lofty spire being remarkable for
 lightness. The castle, which flour-
 ished even in the time of William
 the Conqueror, has been since famed
 for giving birth to our English hero,
 Henry the Fifth.

The Distances in the foregoing Tour.

	Miles.
CHESTER to Wrexham	12
To Ruabon -	5
To Llangollen -	6
To Chirk Castle -	5
To Llanrhaidr -	14
To Welsh Poole -	20
To Montgomery -	8
To Newtown -	9
To Llanbâdarnvy nydd	11
To Llandrindod -	12
To Brecknock -	22
To Abergavenny	18
To Ragland -	14
To Monmouth -	8
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	164

At which places are very good inns
and accommodations.

T O U R

FROM

CHEPSTOW TO SWANSEA,

ST. DAVID'S, CAERNARVON,

AND

RUTHIN.

T O U R

FROM

CHEPSTOW to SWANSEA,

ST. DAVID'S CARRIAGEWAY,

AND

RETURN

T O U R

FROM

CHEPSTOW TO SWASEA, &c.

CHEPSTOW leads through an agreeable neck of land, washed on each side either by the Severn or Wye.

The shores of the Wye are bold, rocky, and woody; but the capital object which catches the eye, on the approach to Chepstow, is the castle, founded on a high perpendicular cliff, rising from the river, and extended along the edge of it.

In descending the hill which leads down to Chepstow bridge, a most enchanting scene suddenly presents itself to view—the Wye is its chief ornament—nothing in nature can be more beautiful than the steep and romantic banks of that river, thickly clothed with wood from the surface of the water to their summits—every here and there a rocky cliff juts out, and the effect is truly fine and striking. The noble and extensive ruin of Chepstow Castle appears majestically in front, and is a magnificent object. We could not obtain any authentic information with regard to its antiquity; but tradition says it was repaired in the thirteenth century, by Richard, Earl of Pembroke. This castle stands on a perpendicular cliff on the western side of the Wye, and commands the town and passage of the river; on which account it

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was formerly considered as a place of strength and consequence. It was besieged and taken by Oliver Cromwell; which is the only memorable occurrence in its history.

The whole fortress occupied several acres, and the ruins of it are still very considerable. The principal gateway has a venerable aspect, and though of Norman origin, and the oldest part of the whole structure, is nearly perfect.

The parish church of Chepstow is part of the old priory, and the west entrance is a handsome arch of Norman architecture, ornamented with the mouldings peculiar to that people.

In the neighbourhood of Chepstow is the celebrated PERSFIELD, late the property and residence of Mr. Morris, who expended a large sum of money in various improve-

ments and embellishments, which are a monument of his taste.

Tintern abbey is situated on the banks of the Wye, a few miles above Chepstow. No monastical ruin in Great Britain presents a more beautiful perspective than the inside of the abbey church. The present remains are carefully preserved from further destruction, and the fallen ornaments of its once vaulted roof are so disposed, in moderate piles, that all their sculpture, which is remarkably sharp, and well executed, may be inspected with the utmost facility.

The body of the church is in its original level; and though the pavement has long since been removed, I scarcely lamented the loss of it, as the substituted turf, clean and entirely free from weeds and briers, has perhaps a better effect.

This abbey was founded in the year 1131; but I should imagine the present church was begun several years afterwards, as it is an elegant specimen of the chaste Gothic, and constructed upon one plan, and in one style.

It was dedicated to God and St. Mary of Tintern, by Walter Fitz-Richard de Clare, Lord of Caerwent and Monmouthshire, William, Earl of Pembroke, and Marechal of England, married the daughter and heiress of Richard de Clare, surnamed Strongbow, and gave divers lands and privileges to the abbots and monks hereof, who were of the Cistercian order, obliging them to pray for their souls, and those of his and his wife's ancestors. Richard de Bigod, Duke of Norfolk, added to these benefactions. It has been famous for the tombs and monu-

ments of several great persons, principally the aforesaid Richard de Clare, called Strongbow, and Walter, Earl of Pembroke, who, in the dispute between the houses of York and Lancaster, was taken prisoner in Banbury fight, and beheaded, and buried here. The length of this abbey, from east to west, is seventy-seven yards; in breadth, from north to south, fifty-three yards. It has twenty-four pillars, and eighty-four windows.

The views from the Wye, between Chepstow and Tintern, are exceedingly magnificent: the rocks on each side seem to be from 300 to 600 feet high; they are sometimes perpendicular and wholly naked, and sometimes the very precipices are covered with woods, from the river's brink to their summits, for continued miles.

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It is impossible to travel through this part of the country without being captivated with the many delightful prospects it affords.

At Caldecot is the shell of a castle, which was built in the Noman age, as the mixture of the circular and Gothic arches sufficiently proves.

Caerwent is at present a miserable village, and has nothing to manifest its Roman greatness, excepting some ruined walls on the south and west sides.

At the village of Christ Church, which is situated on a commanding hill, about three miles from Newport (on the Chepstow side), we were detained a considerable time by the loveliness of the surrounding scenery—the river Uske winding through a narrow valley, washing the town of Newport, and continuing its course, to where it forms

a junction with the Severn, confined all the way by luxuriant hills, which are finely contrasted with the distant black and sterile mountains in the back ground—the Severn, almost as high up as Berkeley, and lower down than where it assumes the name of the Bristol Channel, shaping its rapid course through the spacious and delicious vale of Gloucestershire—the embouchure of the Avon—King-Road, with the shipping lying at anchor and under sail—and, to conclude, the Flat and Steep Holmes, which together with the Channel, bound the view on that side.

The country is here pleasantly enclosed, and near Caerleon the views are extensive and fine.

This city is of great antiquity and fame, and was strongly defended by the Romans with brick walls. Many remains of its ancient magnificence

are still extant; such as splendid palaces, which once emulated, with their gilded roofs, the grandeur of Rome; for it was originally built by the emperors, and adorned with stately edifices; immense baths; ruins of temples; and a theatre, the walls of which are still standing. Here we still see, both within and without the walls, subterraneous buildings, aqueducts, and vaulted caverns. The city is pleasantly situated on the banks of the navigable Uske, and surrounded with woods and pasture.

Various antiquities have, in different ages, been discovered among the ruins of this city. Camden and his continuator have preserved a considerable catalogue of them; and even at this time the fund is not exhausted.

The Roman walls are still visible, but the facing stones have long since been removed for private uses. Near the centre of a field adjoining to the west wall, is the theatre (or more properly the amphitheatre) mentioned by Giraldus.

The form of it only remains, no traces of its walls being now discoverable: the diameter of the area is very large, and is bounded with a high circular entrenchment of earth.

There is very little extant of the castle; which is of a later age; the keep is remarkably lofty, and on climbing up the steep sides of it, we blundered upon a curious piece of Roman antiquity.

It was part of a circular stone, flat on one side, and convex on the other, 27 inches in diameter: on the flat surface is represented in bas relief a female figure sitting: one hand in-

clines downwards, and a small dolphin is sporting in the palm of the other, which is extended. There is a broad foliage round the edge of the stone, which resembling a myrtle-leaf, serves as a border to it.

The figure is indisputably intended for a Venus; and both the design and execution of it, when perfect, in my opinion, far surpassed the general specimens of sculpture which the Romans left in Britain.

The present Caerleon is a melancholy contrast to the ancient, and has scarcely a decent house in it.

Newport is a considerable town and was formerly strengthened with a small castle, situated on the river's brink, the shell of which is still pretty entire.

The country between Newport and Caerdiff is ornamented by the seats of Sir Charles Tent and Mr. Mor-

gan; and watered by the rivulets of Edwith and Romney, whereof the latter separates the countries of Monmouth and Glamorgon.

The bridges over the Uske, both at Newport and Caerleon, and over the Wye at Chepstow, are built upon exceeding high piles of wood: they are floored with boards, which are always loose, but prevented from slipping by small tenons at their ends: the precaution of having the boards unfixed is not unnecessary, as the tides in these rivers sometimes rise to a stupendous height, and would otherwise blow up the bridges.

A new stone bridge of five arches is now building over the Uske at Newport, by Messrs. Edwards, by contract, for 10,165*l*. Since it was begun, Mr. Revely has been appointed as engineer to give his opinion of the construction of it, and

has made several reports to the magistrates on the defects—but no alteration has been made in consequence.

Uske is situated on the river of the same name, over which is a bridge of several arches: the town is built in the form of a square, with the gardens in the centre; the bridge is at one corner, the castle at the next, the church, at the third, and the town-house at the other, which is a neat modern building, where, in general, the county meetings are held. The church appears to be but half the size it was formerly, when it was the priory church, the gateway to which remains, and part of the prior's apartments, which are now a farm-house. The castle is a large building on a small eminence, part of which is also converted into a farm-house.

The roads had hitherto been perfectly good; and though the turnpike is not continued to Caerphily, yet it is a very passable coach-road.

The whole ride is pleasant, at the foot of high hills generally cultivated to their summits; and from Machen, the river Rhymny was our guide to Bedways bridge, which carried us into Glamorganshire.

The town of Caerphily consists of a few humble cottages, and is surrounded with mountains, ruder and less cultivated than those which we had passed.

—The bard,
That roams at eventide, through pathless woods,
His secret way, shapes not ideal scenes
More suited to the pensive range of thought,
Than yonder castle*, 'mid the ruins vast,
Lifting its hoary brow. The mellow tints
That Time's slow pencil lays from year to year

* Caerphily Castle.

is finely diversified with the inequality of the mountains on each side of the torrent; two of them, finely clothed with wood, seem almost to close together; between which, under the small ruins of Castle Coch, we passed into the vale of Glamorgan.

Glamorgan is styled, with great propriety, the Garden of South Wales, and extends from Caerdiff towards the west about twenty-five miles in length, and from the sea-shore eight or ten miles in breadth. It is somewhat remarkable, that this charming valley has for its foundation a bed of rock, at two, or at most, three feet from the surface of the soil.

Caerdiff is a populous but ill-built town, nor is there any thing very pleasing in its environs; its situation is on a low flat, near the mouth of the Taafe.

It has only one church, but this is spacious, and the architecture of the tower is exceedingly light and beautiful.

The old walls of Caerdiff are very extensive, and the ruins of them are still considerable. They were probably built, as well as the large octagon tower on the keep of the castle, by the first Norman invaders.

The most remarkable occurrence in the history of Caerdiff castle, is, that Robert, eldest son of William the Conqueror, and the right heir of his father to both England and Normandy, was, after undergoing various vicissitudes of fortune, at length confined in it by King Henry the First; and here he languished, deprived of his sight, for the term of twenty-six years, when death released him from the unnatural cruelties of his brother.

Landaff stands on a gentle elevation ; it is but a small village, though a bishopric.

The remains of the old chathedral are very beautiful ; the door-cases are all of Norman work, and well executed : the rest of it is an elegant Gothic, though it was constructed so early as the year 1120, and is perhaps one of the oldest specimens of Gothic in the whole island.

The modern cathedral, on which large sums have lately been lavished, is a medley of absurdities : part of the ancient nave is included in it, but the rebuilder has added Roman architecture, mixed with a capricious kind of his own, to the solemnity of the Norman and Gothic.

The ruins of several castles appear in the neighbourhood of Cowbridge ; and St. Donat's particularly deserves attention.

Cowbridge consists of one broad handsome street.

Journeying towards Pile, we left Wenye castle on our right hand, and Ogmere on our left, both within view of the turnpike.

From our cleanly little inn at Pile we made a walking excursion in search of the remains of Cynfeg castle which are more than two miles distant from it.

Scarcely a wall of this castle is now to be seen, and the face of the country must have suffered great revolutions from the winds and inundations, since Fitzhamon, the first Norman invader, chose to fix his residence on this spot.

This fortress was built on one single mount, about the size of a common keep; and there appear no vestiges of other fortifications near it. It is now surrounded with naked sands,

blown up into irregular heaps, and subject to alterations by every storm. The present situation gives no idea of its having been proper either for pleasure or defence.

Near Margam, in a lane leading from thence towards Cynfeg, we saw one of the stones noticed by Camden; it is now placed upright, and the characters of the sculpture are still perfectly legible.

The situation of Margam abbey, founded by William, Earl of Gloucester, grandson to Fitzhamon, is at the foot of a high mountain, wholly covered with wood. The orange-trees in the garden grove are supposed to be the finest in all Britain.

In the street of Margam is an ancient cross, which, with its pedestal, is covered with a profusion of sculpture, representing knots and fret-work. A few characters are seen

near the two figures on it, but I was not able to decipher them, from the years that had worked their decay.

The abbey church is a Norman edifice, in the best taste.

The road is now continued under the mountains, near the Severn shore, and passes close to some large copper-works to Aberavon, where it crosses a stone bridge of one arch to Briton Ferry, which crossing, we rode along the beach for a few miles, and were ferried over the Tavey into Swansea.

The landscape about Briton Ferry is exceedingly rich: the mountains, the river, and its woody banks, form a beautiful back-ground and contrast to the bold and craggy shore, and the broken insulated knolls near it,

Just above the ferry is the seat of Mr. Vernon, situated in the centre of this enchanting view.

The sea breezes from the Bristol Channel have no influence over the verdure of the trees on this southern coast, which flourish as well here as in the more inland parts.

Swansea makes a handsome appearance from the approach to it, being built near the mouth of the Tavey, on a semicircular rising bank above it. The town is populous, and the streets are wide; it carries on a considerable trade in coals, pottery, and copper.

Such is the profusion of coal and limestone in Glamorganshire, that lime is the general manure of the whole country.

The remaining walls of Swansea castle are finished with an open Gothic parapet, through the arches of which the water ran from the tiles.

The high roads through South Wales are, in general, uncommonly good; but that between Swansea and Landino is an exception to the remark, being exceedingly rugged and stony; we did not hesitate, however, to quit this very indifferent road, for one that is almost impassable, which leads over several steep mountains, to the castle of Kaer Kenner; being resolved to inspect a fortress, whose natural strength and peculiarity of position demand the attention, and excite the admiration of the curious, and more especially of the military traveller. In our way thither we had a glimpse of Clenchere, the sequestered residence of a gentleman, whose name has escaped my remembrance. It lies in a deep but verdant dell, agreeably shaded with trees, and watered by a limpid stream, called

the Kenner. This is a very picturesque scene, and appears the more charming from the contrasted sterility and nakedness of the mountains in which it is embosomed. Kaer Kenner is distant only three miles. The remains of this castle stand on the summit of a rocky, exalted, and isolated precipice; perpendicular, and consequently inaccessible, on three sides and very difficult of approach on the other. The walls enclose only a small space; but there is an excavated passage of considerable extent, leading to several apartments, and to a reservoir, which amply supplied the garrison with water. I should conceive, that this castle must have been almost impregnable.

During the greatest part of our dreary ride from Swansea to Landino, the Black Mountains were in sight on the right hand; and at Kaer

Kenner we were within a few miles of one of the most considerable of them, that terminates the ridge in Caermarthanshire. They are covered with fern and dark-brown heath, which give them an appearance (and particularly at a distance) that will agree with the epithet *black*, by which they are distinguished from the neighbouring mountains. It may be imagined, that a country so wild and barren, and that offers so little to the industry of man, is thinly peopled: the shepherds are in fact, its only *human* inhabitants; every now and then you see a lonely cottage, hanging on the side of a precipice, naturally calling to mind the pleasures and advantages of social intercourse, so strikingly contrasted with the unvaried and melancholy occupation of the shepherd.

Leaving Swansea, we crossed over the tedious and dreary mountain of Bettŷ, in the midway towards the Llandilo-vawr (from the extremities of which there is a rich and extensive prospect), and descended into Caermarthenshire.

Llandilo-vawr is a small town, hanging on the declivity of a hill washed by the Towy, which takes its name from the river that glides through it, and washes the town of Landino. This place has two recommendations—its delightful situation, and a very good inn.

According to the history of Wales, by Caradoc of Lhancarvan, the last decisive battle between the armies of Edward the First and Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, was fought near this town, when the King's forces gained a complete victory; in consequence of which, the unfortunate Prince, soon

after, near Builth, lost both his power and life.

This victory put a final period to the Welsh independency, in the year 1282, since which time the principality has continued subject to the crown of England.

Close to the town there is a beautiful seat belonging to Lady Denevor (the widow of the late Mr. Rice). The house is placed in the centre of a charming park, which runs down to the Towy; the woods are venerable and striking; and the groups of trees are scattered over a variety of ground, and disposed with great taste on the banks of the river. On the summit of a pretty eminence, about half a mile from the house, an old tower rears its head above a thicket, and has a pleasing effect.

The ruins of Dinevawr castle* stands on the high prominence of a beautiful semicircular hill, entirely mantled with wood, and which with a regular sweep, precipitately descends to the Towy.

The castle, which Giraldus saw, was razed to the ground in the year 1194, six years after his itinerary; but it was soon rebuilt.

From the extent of the present ruins I cannot conceive it to have been so much a castle of strength and grandeur, as a small palace calculated for the more refined and social pleasures.

The ruins are now enclosed in the beautiful park of Newtown, belonging to Lady Denevor.

The castle of Caraig cennin stands four miles S. E. from Landilo, to-

*To this castle Dyer alludes in his poem of Grongar Hill.

wards the Black Mountain: it is most strongly situated, on the point of a lofty, craggy, insulted rock, three sides of which are wholly inaccessible: it is surrounded at moderate but unequal distances, with mountains; and the roads leading to it are, even now, but barely practicable. The fortrefs, of which there are great remains, does not occupy an acre of ground; for indeed, the rock would not admit of more.

This was doubtless a British building; the remaining ruins confirm the supposition, as there is not the least appearance of Gothic about them.

The well in this castle is a singular curiosity.

I am aware that there is no mention made of this castle in the history of Caradoc of Lhancarvan till the

year 1248, when Rhys Fychan won it from the English, to whom his mother had some time before privately delivered it.

We now continued our route through a charming country, perfectly cultivated on each side of the turnpike.

We had a view on our left hand of the ruins of Durston castle, situated on a large natural knoll, near the Towy; and soon after passed through Abergwilly, where is a seat of the Bishop of St. David's, but which has nothing to recommend it, except the beauty of the neighbouring country.

Caermarthen is a large and handsome Welsh town: I speak by comparison; for, in general, the Welsh streets are narrow and winding, and the decent houses are too often intermixed with the meanest cottages.

Part of the castle is now used as the county gaol ; but there is nothing remarkable in the ruins of it.

According to Giraldus, the walls of Caermarthen were raised with brick, but I could not discover the smallest traces in the remains of them; though the redness of the stones at first deceived me, and inclined me to be of his opinion.

The maiden stone, a rude pillar in the middle of the road near Brecknock, is six feet high, but whether Roman or British cannot be ascertained. On one side are the figures of a man and a woman in ancient habits, particularly curious. From Grongar Hill, eight miles from Caermarthen, is a very extensive view ; likewise the road from Llandilo to Neath, over the mountains.

At this place, in the year 480, flourished the famous *prophet Merlin*. About a mile from the town, nearly opposite to the Bishop of St. David's palace, is a hill covered with wood, called Merlin's Grove, to which he often retired to study: his book of prophecies is still sought after as a curiosity.

A long stone bridge crosses the Towy from this town; but like the common fashion of the country, it is inconveniently narrow.

The beauty of the country now diminishes, and there is little worth attention in the road, till we arrive at Narbeth, a small town, with some remains of a castle, in Pembroke-shire. We had, indeed, a distant view, on our right hand, of the remarkable mountain called the Ragged Rocks, the summit of which appeared circular, and like the stupendous ruins of a castle wall.

About two miles forward we crossed the Cleddy, near which, on the right hand, appear the remains of Lauhaden castle, and on the left the fine woods of Slebach.

It is peculiar to Picton castle that it has always been inhabited. The present possessors are the Philips's, by whom it has been modernized. It is esteemed one of the capital houses in the principality; but the strongest curiosity to examine modern architecture will cause little interruption to a tour through Wales.

Haverfordwest is a large irregular town, built on the declivity of a hill, which is so steep towards the river, that the back windows of the ground floors in one street frequently overlook the roofs of another.

The castle ruins are considerable, and present a grand object to the approach from Narbeth.

As we were soon to traverse an intricate country, we thought it prudent to take a guide part of the road from Haverfordwest, to prevent the difficulties which might otherwise attend us.

We made an excursion from Haverfordwest to Habarston Haikin, situated on the broadest part of Milford Haven.

The little harbour of Habarston is generally full of vessels, which export from it corn, coals, and lime-stone; and we found no difficulty in hiring a convenient boat to carry us to Pembroke.

We sailed across the haven of Milford, so well known for its magnitude and security. It appears like an immense lake; for the

mouth not being at any distance visible, the whole haven seems landlocked: the mouth opens to the southward, and the haven extends itself eastward,

There is nothing bold or picturesque on the shores of it; they are neither mountainous nor woody: the land round the haven consists of small inequalities of ground, pretty well cultivated, though sometimes varied with large furze brakes.

The view of Pembroke and its castle from the river, is very grand. The town is situated upon the ridge of a long and narrow rock, gradually ascending to the highest point, on which stands the castle, at the edge of the precipice. If I may compare small things with great, it resembles much the situation of Edinburgh.

The castle is a Norman structure, mixed with the early Gothic: the principal tower, which is uncommonly high and perfect, has even its stone-vaulted roof remaining.

This fortress was built by Girald, constable of Windsor, ancestor of Combrensis.

We journeyed to see Carew castle and Tenby, in this neighbourhood, the view of which particularly gratified us.

We returned with the tide to Harbarston, and by the same road to our quarters at Haverfordwest, through an enclosed but unpleasant country, near the little parish of Haroldston, which may possibly have taken its name from King Harold.

From Haverfordwest the road leads through a miserable country, leaving a ruined tower of Roche

castle on the right hand, and winds down to the beach of Niwegal, about the midway towards St. David's: it then traverses a mountain, and descends to the romantic little harbour of Solvath, which is a cove, surrounded with high and barren rocks.

A street of small cottages, one of which is the inn, composes the city of St. David's. I had so little notion of its being the bishopric, that I inquired in the street how far it was to St. David's. The reader will easily give me credit, when he hears that the palace and cathedral stand below the town, and cannot be seen from it.

The bishop's palace, which was founded in the reign of Edward the Third, is now an immense ruin; several of the apartments are un-

commonly large, the walls of which are still entire.

Edmund, Earl of Richmond, father of Henry the Seventh, lies under a raised tomb near the middle of the choir; and at a little distance from it is the monument of Owen Tudor.

“ When King Henry the Second
“ was at St. Davis, and from the
“ clifles there in a clear day discover-
“ ed the coast of Ireland, that most
“ mighty monarck of this realme
“ said,”—“ I with my shippes am able
“ to make a bridge thither, if it
“ be no further;” “ which speech of
“ his beeing related to Murchard
“ king of Lemster, in Ireland, he de-
“ maunded if he added not to his
“ speech ‘ with the *grace of God* ;’
“ when it was answered, that hee
“ made no mention of *God*. ‘ Then
“ (said he he, more cheerfully) I feare

“ him lesse which trusteth more to
“ himfelfe than to the helpe of God’.”

—*Giraldus Cambrensis.*

There is something simple and pleasing in the idea of strewing flowers and evergreens over the grave of a departed friend, which is the universal custom in these parts.

The western coast of Wales is mountainous, with steep or perpendicular cliffs towards the Irish sea. In crossing the few rivers in this dreary part of our route, we had a sharp descent from one mountain, and a quick ascent to another. The road is commonly within view of the sea, and sometimes of the Irish coast.

Few enclosures are to be seen in the neighbourhood of St. David's.

I made a short excursion from thence to see *y maen fŷgl*, or the

shaking stone, mentioned by Gibson: it lies near the most westerly point of St. David's Head. Its shaking was certainly, a *lusus naturæ* as it is a fragment fallen from the upper rock,

This stone has long since been immoveable, but never could be so curious as the famous rocking stone at Stonehenge in Wiltshire.

The weight of the two stones in question appeared to me to be nearly equal.

Fisgard stands upon the point of a mountain, from which there is a steep descent (cut from the precipice) to its little harbour, at the mouth of the Gwyne.

Within two miles of Newport, a poor town, situated under the ruins of a small castle, the road passes, close to the remains of four or five Druid sepulchres or altars; the

stones are large, and were originally supported with four upright pillars, like the legs of a table: they are all within the circumference of about sixty yards, and one of them is nearly perfect.

These monuments lie on the left hand of the road in an enclosed field, which, in English pronunciation, is called Daertinman.

The old cross, mentioned by Gibson, remains in the church-yard at Nevern; but we could not find either the inscribed stone, on the north side of the church-yard, or the inscription in the church; nor could we learn any intelligence of them.

The church at Nevern has no pavement in it; and the frequent burials, in the manner of St. David's, have raised the ground within, seven or eight feet higher than it is without.

This parish is pleasantly situated on the banks of the river Nevern, and backed by some fine shady hills: we ascended one of them, and, by a bad and intricate road, arrived at Cardigan, having passed through the dirty village of St. Dogmael, formerly famous for its abbey, some ruins of which still remain, and which the river Tyvy divides from Cardiganshire.

Most of the ancient monuments in these parts have lately been destroyed and converted to private uses.

Cardigan stands upon a gentle eminence, rising from the Tyvy, over which there is a handsome stone bridge. Part of the outward walls of the castle is still remaining, but the materials within have long since been removed.

We rode from hence to Llangoidmore, and, sending our horses from thence round to Llechryd bridge, followed a beautiful shady path cut from the precipice of the Tyvy bank for two miles. This river runs in a broad and translucent stream between the sloping hills, which are about two hundred feet in height, and wholly covered with wood, from the water's brink to their summits. This sylvan scene is only once interrupted by a lofty, naked, and projecting rock, on which stand the romantic ruins of Cilgarran castle, and which, by its singular contrast, to the rest of the view, gives a finishing to a delicious landscape.

The following lines breathe so much pathos, and exhibit such delicate shades of elegant poetry, that we flatter ourselves they will be acceptable to the reader. From the

unfortunate lot of the heroine in the poem, it appears, the village swains, and their lasses, still hold sacred an hour to commemorate her unshaken affection for her William, by annually gathering flowers, and strewing them over her grave.

The maids and village swains, who annual meet,
Lucy! to scatter o'er thy funeral sod
Fresh flowers; I knew thee in thy happier days,
Ere melancholy love had wrought thee woe.
Oh! if the muse had taught my lip to breathe
Those sounds which hang upon the ear of time,
That magic melody which makes the past
Present, re-animates the dead, and gives
To immortality; thee hapless maid!

Thee from oblivion my memorial note
Of pity should preserve. His country forc'd
Her lover from her arms; in foreign lands
The soldier fell; but Lucy liv'd, if that
May life be deem'd, when maddening o'er its
grief

Broods dark despair. Yet a mild beam of peace
Gleam'd transient on her soul, when unrestrain'd
Amid the lov'd retreats where WILLIAM dwelt
Frequent she linger'd. Oft on TYVY's banks
At early dawn the lonely angler met

Poor Lucy, wreathing 'mid her locks fresh
flowers,

And at the dusky close of eve, again

On the same spot, from her dishevell'd hair,
Scattering the faded blossoms in the stream;
Then floating down the eddying wave, thy corse
The wandering shepherd found, Beneath this
turf

At length thy sorrows rest. Poor maid, farewell.

SOTHABY.

We met our horses at Llechryd bridge, a little below which are some large and expensive works lately erected by a company for the purpose of making tin plates.

From these works the beauty of the river diminishes; but we were informed, that, at some distance upwards, the Tyvy is still more picturesque.

The town of Llanarch consists of a few straggling cottages, but the name served us as a guide to Aberystwyth: for we soon found it neces-

fary to be previously acquainted with every place in our route, as we could seldom get any farther intelligence from the few people we met on the road than to the next town or village. But, indeed, the intricacies of this ride were frequently relieved by proper direction-posts.

We now left a deep and shady dale on the left hand, and soon after descended to Aberaron.

From hence the shore becoming more level and agreeable, the road quickly passes by the intrenchment of a small castle, half of which has long since been washed away by the sea.

About two hundred yards on the left hand of the road, and two miles beyond Llanruffed, are two supposed Druidical sepulchral monuments; they are upright single stones, and one of them, when perfect, mea-

sured eleven feet in height above the ground, and five feet six inches in breadth.

Aberyſtwyth is ſituated on an eaſy elevation, in the miſt of a broad vale, at the mouth of the river Yſtwyth. All the towns beginning with Aber, denote their being near the mouth of a river; for Aber, in Welch, is a ſmaller ſtream, diſcharging itſelf into a greater, or into the ſea.

Part of the old wall of the town is remaining, but all the facing ſtones have been taken away. The caſtle has undergone the ſame fate, and the ruins of it are now trifling, except one, a Gothic tower, the ſhell of which remains for a ſea-mark.

We learn from Powell the hiſtorian, that the preſent caſtle was founded by King Edward the Firſt, in

1277, a few years before his complete conquest of Wales.

From Tal y bont, our late long *tedium* began to find some relief from a cheerful sylvan scene, which conducted us by the sides of two waterfalls, near Gwellyn-gwin bridge, to the banks of the Dovy.

The prospect before us is now enchanting; while the striking contrast of the present object, to the melancholy waste we have lately left, makes us more sensible of the pleasing transition.

The navigable Dovy runs through a broad expanse of rich meadows, encircled with a majestic chain of superb mountains, the slopes of which are beautifully chequered with cornfields, pastures, and large woods.

Machynlleth lies in a small verdant plain, surrounded with mountains. It stands in the extreme west

angle of Montgomeryshire, and the bridge from the town carried us into Merioneth.

Leaving Machynlleth, we soon found ourselves in a truly Alpine valley. The rapid torrent, roaring over a bed of broken rocks, and now and then interrupted by immense fragments, from which it fell in considerable cataracts; the woody and exalted precipices on each side of the river, and the mountain brooks continually rattling about us; formed a miniature picture of the romantic road between Aigues-belles and Mount Cenis. Towards the extremity of this beautiful scene, the huge mountain of Cader Idris presented its naked, craggy, and prominent cliff, full to our front. I never saw an object more awfully sublime; it extends more than half

a mile in length, and is at least a thousand feet high.

The road passes under part of this gloomy and tremendous precipice, on the right hand; within sight of a large lake on the left, and close to the brink of a smaller. It then crosses an arm of Cader Idris, and with a quick descent of two rocky miles ends at Dolgelly. Part of this latter path leads through a thin oak wood, which hangs over an impetuous torrent, foaming down a rugged declivity as steep as the road.

The town of Dolgelly is finely situated upon the Wnion bank: the vallies around are richly interspersed with woods and decent houses, while the mountains bound every prospect from the town at irregular distances.

There appears some spirit in the flannel trade in this neighbourhood,

which extends its busy influence for many miles round the country.

We now passed near the poor remains of Venner Abbey, or Kinner, according to Speed, and crossing the river Mawddach or Maw, soon traversed another Alpine vale.

About five miles from Dolgelly (a few large Scotch firs on each side of the road marking the spot) we turned upwards on our left to see a waterfall behind a small house of a widow Vaughan. This cataract is broken into two broad parts; the upper descends about thirty-five feet upon a small craggy ridge, and the lower about twenty feet, into a romantic basin, encircled with perpendicular or impending rocks: a fine wood surrounds it, and some of the largest trees project their shady branches over the precipice of the cascade.

Returning to the high road, we soon crossed a bridge, under which the torrent rattled from the above cascade down a deep declivity, and through large disjointed fragments towards the river.

We quitted the valley two miles farther, and ascended a barren and dismal mountain: the road continued lonesome and melancholy for several miles, but at length conducted us to a comfortable little inn at Tan y Bwlch.

These remarkable cataracts are each of them the fall of a whole river, and situated within a quarter of a mile of one another.

In an excursion from Tan y Bwlch towards Harlech, we deviated a little from the road, to see the Rhaidr du, or black cataract, so called from the colour of its water.

This is a fall of the rivulet Velenryd, about forty feet in depth: a regular bason, semicircled with rock, and surrounded with a thin grove, receives it. The rest of the valley is poor and unenclosed.

As we approached Harlech, the road became scarcely practicable; it was literally a stair-case path, worn on the side of a steep precipice of a craggy and disjointed mountain.

We had as yet seen no castle so perfect as this at Harlech; the shell is entire. I have no doubt but that the present fortress was erected by Edward the First. It is a noble square building with a round tower at each corner, and one on each side the entrance; it was completed before the year 1283. (See Ayloffe's Welsh Calendar.) It is situated on a very high rock projecting in the Irish sea.

In order to avoid the goat track of our morning ride, we returned over the sands of the Traeth Bychan, which are passable only at low water.

It is remarkable that we had hitherto never deviated from the true line of our route, when alone, and that we seldom failed of doing it when we employed a guide.

Our present Ciceroni from Tan y Bwlch conducted us wrong both to and from Harlech; and on our return we were obliged to have guide upon guide, before we ventured to cross the sands, which are by no means difficult when known, but which, from their shifting and quickness, are intricate and dangerous to strangers.

We were induced by the cleanliness of our little inn, and the attentive complacency of the landlady, to sleep three nights at Tan y Bwlch.

This is a single house, in the parish of Festiniogg; and about three miles below it, the river Dryryd divides the inn from the parish church and village of Maynturogg; it lies in a deep and narrow valley between the mountains, which are but moderately clothed with wood, excepting near the house, where the sylvan walks, amid the craggy precipices, are extremely picturesque.

At a little distance from the inn, on a woody mountain's side, is a pleasant seat of William Oakley, Esq.

We now traversed a desolate and cloud-clapt country; but as it happened to be low water, we avoided some of these monrnsul mountains by descending on the sands of the Traeth Mawr, which carried us to the Pont Aberglaslyn, which divides Merioneth from Caernarvonshire.

This bridge is one wide stone arch, and is built over a roaring waterfall, from two perpendicular precipices.

Here we paused—the grandeur of the scene before us impressed a silent admiration on our senses.—We at length moved slowly onward, contemplating the wonderful chasm. An impending craggy cliff, at least 800 feet high, projects from every part of its broken front stupendous rocks of the most capricious forms, and shadows a broad translucent torrent, which rages like a cataract, amidst the huge ruins fallen from the mountain.

The disjointed fragments of the opposite declivity, crushing their mouldering props, seem scarcely prevented from overwhelming the narrow ridge, which forms the road upon the brink of the flood.

Leaving with regret this sublime and unparalleled pass, which continues for near a mile, we pursued our route through the miserable town of Bethkelert, over a rocky desert at the foot of Snowden, and by the edge of two lakes, one of which commands attention from its size and the scenery around it, to Llynquellyn bridge, under which is a picturesque waterfall, from whence there is a good road through the small village of Bettws to Caernarvon, of which town you have a beautiful view before you enter it; and a turnpike road of nine miles brings you to Bangor, a small town with a few decent houses scattered about it, the best of which belongs to the church. The old cathedral was burnt by Owen Glendwr, about the year 1404: the present was built by Bishop Dennis, in the reign of Henry the Seventh.

A vale begins now to open, which gradually spreads itself into the pleasant and rich country around Caernarvon.

I entirely agree with Mr. Barrington, that the plans of the Welsh castles, founded by Edward the First, were borrowed from the Asiatic fortresses which that prince had seen in the Holy Land, because they are precisely similar to many which Le Brun hath copied and inserted in his valuable travels.

We crossed the Menai Ferry at Beaumaris, and a four miles ride over the sands at low water, where the true path was sufficiently pointed out by posts at proper distances, carried us to the Irish turnpike at Llanābar in Caernarvonshire.

We had a glimpse, for a few minutes only, of the summit of Cader Idris, from Dolgelly.

During our abode amid those superb mountains, neither sun nor stars appeared to our sight for several days; and, wrapt up in an impenetrable mist, we were perpetually enveloped with a twilight obscurity.

But on our emerging from these romantic visions, the first view of the cheerful rays of the long absent sun gave an inexpressible refreshment to our spirits—it saluted our immediate approach to the vale of Caernarvon. We changed the climate in an instant—we breathed a freer air.

The situation of Conway is exceedingly fine: it lies on the bank of a noble river, and in the centre of a beautiful vale, well cultivated and woody.

Here we found a considerable alteration in the manners of the people. We were now in the great Irish road; the article of eating was now doubled in our bills.

The town of Conway is small, and indifferently built: it was fortified with walls which still remain, and a castle, by Edward the First. (See page 38 and 171 for a further account.)

We crossed the wide ferry at Conway, which brought us into Denbighshire, and traversed a hilly country till we came within eight miles of St. Asaph, when we entered the fertile vale of Clwyd.

We passed over Penmaen-ros in this morning's ride, where the declivity is steep and the road indifferent: a nearer path is cut for horses along the side of the sea cliff, in the same manner as at Penmaen-mawr: but it is so formidably narrow and unprotected, that few people dare trust themselves on their horses on it.

Rhuddlan Castle is noted in history for the famous statute enacted in it by Edward the First, in the year 1284,

for the better government of his newly-acquired dominion ; and the preamble of this statute informs us of the entire subjection of Wales.

Leaving the Irish road at St. Asaph we soon arrived at the picturesque town of Denbigh, which is built on the declivity of a lofty hill, on the highest point of which are the ruins of a strong castle of the time of Edward the First. The principal gateway is a beautiful Gothic arch, and the king's statue remains in a niche over it, in the same manner as at the castle of Caernarvon.

The original town stood upon this hill, and the walls of it are still visible ; but at present the parish church only remains on it, near which is the unfinished shell of a larger church, with a nave and two aisles, which appears to have been begun in the fifteenth century. It is now a ruin.

Ruthin is a large and populous town on the Clwyd, commanding an extensive prospect into the charming vale.

*Further interesting Objects in the Tour
from Chepstow, &c.*

THE most remarkable antiquity of Glamorganshire is Kevn Bryn, a monument of unwrought stone, upwards of twenty tons, supported by six or seven others, set round in a circle to bear up the great one. The carriage and fixing of this stone is, no doubt, the effect of human industry, though it has been called in question.

The most extensive views are the vale of Tave, seen from the mountains of Rugmore rock, in the road to Brecon, and the bridge of Tavy, eight miles from Caerphilly.

Lhan Newydd is remarkable for a stone pillar near the highway, and for being the residence of a great ancestor of O. Cromwell, the *Protector*.

Below Talcharn, on the bank of the Tavy, stood a white house, built of hazel rods, where Howel Ddha or the good Prince of Wales, in an assembly of 140 ecclesiastics, besides laymen, gave a body of laws to this kingdom.

Straflour Abbey, in Cardiganshire, was built by Hore Refus, Prince of South Wales, in the year 1164, but was burnt in the various conflicts of nations, and rebuilt by Henry the First; the public records were kept here from 1156 to 1270.

At Machynlleth in Montgomeryshire, *Owen Glyndwr* exercised the first acts of his royalty in 1402: here he accepted the crown of Wales, and assembled a parliament; the house

wherein they met is now standing, divided into separate tenements.

The following are the Distances in the foregoing Tour, as near as can be ascertained.

	Miles.
CHEPSTOW to Newport -	19
To Caerphily -	12
To Caerdiff -	20
To Cowbridge -	12
To Pile - - -	12
To Swansea - -	15
To Llandilo Vawr -	22
To Caermarthen -	18
To Narbeth -	22
To Haverfordwest -	10
To St. David's -	16
To Fisgard - -	20
To Cardigan -	19
To Aberaron - -	28
To Aberyftwth -	18

To Machynlleth	-	18
To Dolgelly	- -	16
To Tan y Bwlch	-	21
To Harlech	- -	13
To Caernarvon	-	21
To Beaumaris	- -	15
To Conway	- -	14
To Abergelle	- -	10
To St. Afaph	- -	8
To Denbigh	- -	6
To Ruthin	- - -	8

Total	413
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At all of which places there are
good accommodations.

T O U R

FROM

ROSS TO BALA,

DENBIGH, up the Vale of CLWYD,

TO

CAERNARVON.

T O U R

FROM

R O S S to B A L L A, &c.

WE took up our abode at the King's Arms at Ross, formerly the habitation of that celebrated character known by the name of the "Man of Ross," whom Mr. Pope has so highly praised in his poetical works. He was indeed a friend to the human kind. He gave his worldly goods, as far as they would go, to the unfortunate sufferer; and his best wishes and compassion to all. His memory is

still revered, and his loss lamented in this place.

The following lines, deserving of attention, were written upon a window-shutter:

Here dwelt the Man of Rofs. Otraveller, here
Departed merit claims the rev'rend tear;
Friend to the friendless, to the sick man health,
With generous joy he view'd his modest wealth.
If'neath this roof thy wine-cheer'd moments pass,
Fill to the good man's name one grateful glass,
To higher zest shall mem'ry wake thy soul,
And virtue mingle in th' enobled bowl.
Here cheat thy cares—in generous visions melt,
And dream of goodness thou hast never felt.

Departing from Rofs, we pursued our journey over a very picturesque part of Montgomeryshire, until we arrived at the capital, Montgomery, which is a neat town, and pleasantly situated, partly on the summit of a hill. It owes its foundation to Baldwyn, Lieutenant of the Marches to William the

Conqueror; it is also probable he built the castle some time before 1092. (See Powell's Hist.) This castle met the fate of others in the civil wars. On a hill, not far from the castle, is a strong British post, guarded by four ditches. Lord Herbert speaks of it as the habitation of some of his ancestors. From this point is a beautiful view of the vale of Montgomery, which is very extensive, and bounded by the hills of Shropshire. The town was once defended by walls, strengthened by towers, and had also four gates. Camden says, Henry the Third granted by charter, that the borough of Montgomery should have the privilege of a free borough, with other liberties. The church is dedicated to St. Nicholas. The house called Blackhall, once the hospitable residence of the

family, stood at the bottom; a foss now marks the spot being consumed by fire. The Lodge in Limore Park, at a small distance from the town, is still kept up, and shows a venerable wooden front: except St. Asaph, it is one of the smallest capital towns in the king's dominions.

We continued our journey to Welsh Poole, in the neighbourhood of which, upon a most beautiful eminence, stands Powis Castle.—“ It stands upon the side of a very high hill; below lies a vale of incomparable beauty, with the Severn winding through it: the town of Welsh Poole terminated with high mountains. The opposite side is beautifully cultivated half way up, and green to the top, except in one or two hills, whose summits are rocky and of grotesque shapes, that give variety and spirit to the

prospect. Above the castle is a long ridge of hills finely shaded, part of which is the park; and still higher is a terrace, up to which you are led through very fine lawns, from whence you have a view that exceeds all description. The country of Montgomery, which lies all within this view, was, to our eyes, the most beautiful in South Britain." (See Lord Lyttleton's Tour.)

From Poole to Gilesfield the country is beautifully broken into gentle risings, prettily wooded.

The road from thence to Llanvilling is very intricate, and we contrived to lose our way more than once, notwithstanding we had been told it was very straight.

We were much delighted with the whole of our journey to Llanvilling, a small town which had a charter bestowed on it in the reign of

Edward the Second; also with the small but pleasant river Verniew, which we crossed.

Llangunnog is singularly situated, surrounded on all sides by barren and sandy hills. The place consists only of a few houses, amongst which there is a small church, where once a week a sermon is delivered in the Welsh language. A lead mine was discovered here in 1692, and continued in a flourishing state during a period of forty years, when the water became too powerful, from having worked it to the depth of one hundred yards.

About two miles distance up a small valley, is the shrine of St. Monacella; her hard bed is shewn in the cleft of a neighbouring rock; her tomb was in a little chapel or oratory adjoining the church, and now used as a vestry-room.

From this place we proceeded to Bala, situated upon the borders of a large lake. The country round is grand and sublime, but not interesting; stupendous mountains seem "to mix their heads with dropping clouds;" but with respect to cultivation, or even verdure, they are entirely destitute. It is a small town in the parish of Llanckil, noted for its vast trade in woollen stockings, and its great markets every Saturday morning. Much of the wool is bought at the great fairs at Llanrwlst in Denbighshire. Close to the south-east end of the town is a great artificial mount, called Tommen y Bala, in the summer-time usually covered in a picturesque manner with knitters of both sexes and all ages. This mount appears to have been Roman, and placed here with a castelet on its

summit, to secure the pass towards the sea, and keep the mountaineers in subjection. The town is of a very regular form; the principal street very spacious, and the lesser fall into it at right angles. Bala takes its name from its vicinity to the place where a river discharges itself from a lake which lies at a small distance from the town, and is a fine expanse of water, near four miles long, and twelve hundred yards broad in the widest place; the deepest part is opposite Bryn Golen, where it is forty-six yards deep, with three yards of mud; the shores gravelly; the boundaries are easy slopes, well cultivated and varied with wood: in stormy weather its billows run very high. It rises sometimes nine feet, and has overflowed the fair vale of Edeirnion. The waters are dis-

charged under Pont Mwnwgl y Llyn, a bridge of three arches. They seem inconsiderable in respect to the size of the streams which feed the lake; for the Dee does not make in dry seasons the figure we expected. Report says, that the Dee passes through the lake from end to end, without deigning to mix its waters, as the Rhone was fabled to serve the lake of Geneva; but, in fact, the Dee does not assume its name till it quits its parent.

It was late in the evening when we left Bala, and therefore, contrary to our intention, we took up our quarters for the night at the Druid house, a solitary place, only eight miles distant from that which we had last quitted; and early the following morning we pursued our journey to Rug, and from thence to Corwen, whose church and town

form a pretty view from different parts of the road. We next proceeded to Llangollen. The face of the country now became more interesting. The scene gradually assumed a less rugged appearance; the dark brown mountain, and the desolated heath, softened by distance, formed a beautiful contrast to the wild and irregular scenery that succeeded. We felt our spirits which had before been depressed from the barren and gloomy country we had traversed, now much exhilarated, and we seemed to breathe a freer air.

Our road was along the banks of the river Dee, which falls murmuring over its pebbled bed at the foot of the mountains, whose steep sides are covered with wood of the largest growth; here and there the shaggy rock, more than half concealed by the surrounding foliage,

peering its broken summit beyond the most extended branches, and threatening, by its fall, to obstruct the course of the river beneath; whilst the spreading beech-tree and mountain-ash are found in great abundance upon its banks, dipping their slender branches in the stream.

Lladgollen is most delightfully situated*.

There are two roads from Llan-gollen to Wrexham, one on each side of the river Dee; the best is that on the right, which we took, but it is rather the longest. The road is carried upon the highest grounds, from whence the prospect is delightful. The river, winding through the valleys, sometimes intercepted by a rising ground or thick wood, then opening full upon the view, the

* See page 166 for a minute description of it.

luxurience of nature is richly displayed through the whole landscape.

On the other side, the river stealing through the valley, had by its overflowing, contributed to give it the richest appearance of fertility. In some places the mower, almost buried under the high grass, often paused from his labour: in others, the sharp sound of the grinding-stone, the loud laugh, or toil-subduing song, were frequently heard: on the sides of the opposite hills were scattered the modest hamlets that owned these industrious peasants; behind us, at some distance, the whitened spire, and part of the little town we had left, were still visible; whilst over all, the setting sun cast its softened tints, a part of the valley only being shaded by the interposition of a neighbouring mountain, whose summit still retained in glow-

ing colours the last rays of the departing day.

About half way from Llangollen to Wrexham, we crossed a bridge where the two roads meet, and then we had a adieu to the river Dee, which kept its course afterwards to the right of us. Wrexham is a large, populous, and well-buit town*.

From Wrexham our road became less interesting, and for ten or twelve miles presented nothing to recompense the fatigue of a long and tedious ride, until we had ascended a very high hill, when the vale of Clwyd, in all its beauty, unfolded upon the sight: it appeared like a moving picture, upon which nature had been prodigal of its colours. Hamlets, villages, towns, and castles, rose like enchantments upon this

* See page 163 for a description of this place.

rich carpet, that seemed covered with wood and enclosures; in the midst of it, at the distance of a above five miles, the town of Ruthin partially appeared from the bosom of a most beautiful grove of trees; the vale on each side being bounded by a chain of lofty mountains: and far off, on a bold and rugged promontory, stood Denbigh, with its fortress, the undisputed mistress of this extended scene. The great defect of the vale is its want of water; the little river Clwyd, which winds through it, not being perceptible at any distance.

Ruthin is pleasantly seated on the easy slope and summit of a rising ground; the castle stood on the south side, and in part sunk beneath the earth: its poor remains impend over the fall of land fronting the west, where a fragment or two of a town are still to be seen, mixed with the

native rock which, in parts, served as a facing to the fortress, whose lower part was formed out of it: a very deep foss, hewn out of the solid stone, with a portal at each end, divides it breadthways. The views from the summit of the ruins are very well worthy of the traveller's attention. If he is fond of a more aerial one, we would by all means have him ascend the heights of Bwlch pen y Barras, from whence is a full prospect of the boasted vale, and the remote hills of the Alpine tract. The town of Ruthin was burnt by Owen Glendwr, on September 20, 1400. He took the opportunity of surprising it during the fair, enriching his followers with the plunder, and then retired to his fastness among the hills. In the last century, the castle was garrisoned by the loyalists, and sustained, in 1646,

a siege from February to the middle of April, when it surrendered.

The church is large, yet only a chapel to Llanrùth; the roof is prettily divided into small squares, ornamented with sculpture, and marked with the names of the workmen. The only monument of any note is that of Dr. Gabriel Goodman, Dean of Westminster in the times of Queen Elizabeth, whose figure is represented by a bust. This illustrious divine was a native of Ruthin, and was greatly distinguished by his various merit. Leland mentions an house of white friars in this town, but gives no particulars. It probably stood in the street to this day called Priors street. The new jail does much honour to the architect, Mr. Joseph Turner; the contrivance comprehended all the requisites of

these seats of misery—security, cleanliness and health.

From hence we proceeded to Denbigh. This town is well built, and the principal street, which is on the slope of the hill, is broad and clean, and the accommodations good. Its manufactures in shoes and gloves are very considerable, and great quantities are annually sent to London. After tea we took a walk to view the castle, whose venerable walls, rising high above the town, command a magnificent view.

The prospect through the broken arches is extremely fine, extending in parts over the whole vale, and all its eastern hills, from Moel Venlii to Diferth rock; a rich view, but deficient in water; the river Clwyd being too small to be seen, as before noticed, though in great rains so

furious, as to overflow a great space of the meadowy tract.

It was built in the reign of Edward the First, and garrisoned in the time of Charles the First by the royalists, but was obliged to surrender to the parliament army after a gallant and vigorous defence; the breaches in the walls are vast, and serve to show the strength and thickness of their construction. The royal and unfortunate fugitive, Charles the First, after his retreat from Chester took up his abode for one night in this castle.

Leland relates a particular of this fortress, which I do not recollect to have seen in any other historian; he says, that Edward IV. was besieged in it; and that he was permitted to retire, on condition that he should quit the kingdom for ever. The only time in which that prince was con-

frained to abdicate his dominions was in 1470, when he took shipping at Lynn, not by reason of any capitulation with his enemies, but through the desperate situation of his affairs at that period.

Denbigh is more of a venerable than a magnificent ruin, and would of itself have amply repaid us for all the fatigue we had undergone.

Viewing the castle alone, nothing could be more awfully grand than the scene before me, which I surveyed with a degree of admiration not totally destitute of a superstitious fear. The venerable appearance of the whole fabric; walls and battlements rising in ruined majesty; broken arches, half covered by the creeping ivy and enchanter's nightshade; high Gothic windows, which but displayed the horrible gloom that reigned within; the mouldering

tower, shook by every storm, affording an asylum to the owl and the bat; whilst the moon bursting from a dark cloud, threw a partial gleam upon the pile, and served by its feeble light to discover the deep gloom of the remoter parts*.

UPON THE RUINS OF

DENBIGH CASTLE.

Proud pile! thy tempest beaten tow'rs, that rear
 Their heads sublime, and to the angry storm
 Bid bold defiance, though their aged brows
 Bear visible the marks of stern decay;
 While Superstition, with a frenzied eye,
 And 'wildering Fear, that horrid forms surveys,
 Affright the lonely wanderer from thy walls.

Far hence, thou busy world, not here intrude
 Thy sounds of uproar, arguing much of care

* This town has been noticed in page 204; the reason for giving it a place again, was from the description being more enlarged, and probably more accurate; therefore we trust it will not be less satisfactory to the reader on that account.

And impotent alarms. Behold, fond man,
This feeble monument of mortal pride,
Where time and desolation reign supreme
With wildest havoc—o'er the solemn scene
In silence pause, and mark this pictur'd truth;
That not alone the proudest works of man
Must perish; but as this tow'ring fabric,
That lifts its forehead to the storm, till time
And the wild winds shall sweep it from the base;
Pass but a few short hours—the dream of life
Is fled, and to the cold grave sinks man's faded
form.

From Denbigh we went to the hospital house of Gwaenynog, about two miles distant, fronted by the most majestic oaks in the principality. The fine wooded dingles belonging to the demesne are extremely well worth visiting: they are most judiciously cut into walks by the owner, John Middleton, Esq. and afford as beautiful scenery in their kind as any that may be found.

Mael Varmna superbly terminates one view; and the ruins of Denbigh

castle burst awfully at the termination of the concluding path.

Llanerch, the seat of the Dean of St. Afaph, stands most advantageously in a small but beautiful park, with a fine piece of water at the bottom and commanding a rich view of the vale, and a long extent of the Clwydian hills, with their fertile sides terminating in healthy summits. The venerable old house, particularly the respectable ancient hall, is fritered into a villa. The former gardens were made by Mutton Davies, Esq. on his return out of Italy in the last century, and were fine in that sort of style, decorated with water-works and statues, emitting water from various parts, to the astonishment of the rustic spectators

Not far from Henllan church, in the parish of Llanfrydd, on the bank of the brook Meircheon, are the re-

mains of a seat of Merdddydd ap Meircheon, Lord of Isdulas. Part is now standing, particularly the chapel, which serves for a farmhouse; but some very extensive foundations shew its former importance.

From hence after a ride of a few miles, we reached the vale of the river Aled, a very narrow tract bounded by high hills. The old house of Dyffreyn Aled stood in the bottom; it had been for many generations the seat of the Wynnes, descended from Marchud.

At the head of the valley stand the village and church of Lansunnan, dedicated to St. Sannan, confessor and hermit, the friend of St. Winefrede. Their remains were both interred at Gwytherin.

In our way we descended a very wooded dell, in the township of Penured, to visit the gloomy cataract

of Llyn yr ogo, where the Aled tumbles into an horrid black cavern, shaded by oakes.

Somewhat higher up is another, exposed to full day, fallen from a vast height, and dividing the naked glen. Llyn Aled, the small lake from which the river flows, lies at a short distance, amidst black and heathy mountains, through which runs much of the road to Gwytherin.

That little village and church stand on a bank at the head of a small vale near the rise of the Elwy: the church is celebrated for the honour of having first received the remains of St. Winefrede.

We followed the course of the Elwy by Havodynosc, the seat of Howell Lloyd, Esq. by the church and village of Llanguniui; by Garthewin, the seat of the late Robert Wynne,

Esq. commanding a most lovely view of a fertile little valley, bounded by hills, and covered with hanging woods; and by Llanvair, Dôl-haeam, a village and church at a small distance above the conflux of the Elwy and Aled. Returning to Gwaenynog, we passed beneath Denbigh castle, and visited Llanrhaider, a village in the middle of the vale, remarkable for an east window of good and very entire painted glass, expressing a favourite subject of the time, the roote of Jesse. The patriarch is represented sprawling at the bottom with a genealogical tree issuing out of him, containing all the kings of Israel and Juda up to our Saviour. The branches around the kings are in very beautiful foliage; at the top is a rose of Lancaster, and another with an eye of glory within it, the window being done in 1533.

after the accession of that house. Opposite to the church is the house of Llanrhaider, partly ancient, partly rebuilt by Richard Parry, Esq. the late owner. On an eminence to the north-west of the church, called Gwladus' Chair, is an extremely beautiful view of the vale between Denbigh and Ruthin, and the whole breadth chequered with wood, meadows and cornfields, and almost the whole range of the eastern limits soaring far above it. Denbigh castle from hence shews itself to great advantage, with its walls and towers extending along its precipitous base.

At the foot of this rising is Fynnon St. Dyfnog, a fine spring, formerly much resorted to by votaries. The fountain is enclosed in an angular wall, decorated with small human figures, and before it is

the well for the use of the pious bathers.

Near the road to Ruthin is Bachymbyd a seat and estate belonging to Lord Bagot.

Near the side of the road are to be seen some very fine chesnut trees, one of which is near twenty-four feet in circumference. The reader need not be told that this species of trees is not a native of Great Britain, nor even of Europe. We are indebted for it to the Romans; who probably first planted it in Kent.

We now passed through Ruthin, and saw the neat mother church of Llanruth. There is in this church a monumental bust of Ambrose, admirably cut: his hair short, beard packed, and tuff flat.

Two miles east of Ruthin is the seat of Edward Thelwall, Esq. of Llanbeder, a most beautiful situation

high on the side of the hills. From Llanruth the vale grows very narrow, and almost closes with the parish of Llanvair. If we place the extremity at Pont Newydd, there cannot be a more beautiful finishing; where the bridge near the junction of the Clwyd and the Hespden, and a lofty hill with its bank clothed with hanging woods, terminate the view.

We next ascended the vale of Nant-clwd, and for some time rode over dreary commons. On one is a small encampment with a single foss called *Caer-Senial*. Near this place we entered *Merionethshire* within sight of *Caer Drewyn*, another post, in full view of the beautiful vales of *Glyn-dwr-dwy*, watered by the *Dee*. It lies on the steep slope of an hill, is of a circular form, and about half

a mile in circumference, and mostly in ruins.

This post or fastness of Caer Drewyn is but one of the chains that begins at Diferth, and is continued along the Clwydian hills into the mountains of Yale. Descending, we found the usual ford of the Dee to Corwen impassable, got again into the Ruthin road, and passed near the house of Rûg.

The mount on which the castlelet stood is still to be seen in the garden.

We crossed the Dee on a very handsome bridge of six arches, from which the river shows itself to great advantage above and below, in form of two extensive channels bordered by trees, and fertilizing a verdant tract of meadows; and soon reached Corwen.

Lord Lyttleton says, Corwen is celebrated for being the great ren-

devous of the Welsh forces under Owen Gwynedd, who from hence put a stop to the invasion of Henry the Second, in the year 1165. The place of encampment is marked, as we are told, by a rampart of earth, above the church southward, and by the marks of the sites of abundance of tents from thence to the village of Cynwyd. On the south side of the church wall is cut a very rude cross, which is shewn to strangers as the sword of Owen Glendwr.

Leaving Corwen, we returned as far as the bridge on the way we came. The vast Berwyn mountains are the eastern boundary of this beautiful vale. Their highest tops are Cader Fronwen. On the first is a great heap of stones brought from some distant part, with great toil, up their steep ascent, and in their middle is an erect pillar: of him, whose am-

bition climbed this height for a monument, we are left in ignorance. Under their summit is said to run an artificial road called Helen's way.

Cynwyd is a small village, formerly noted for the courts kept here; but they have been long discontinued, and the records destroyed.

Rhaider Cynwyd finely finishes the end of the view, and extends about half a mile from the village. The water of the river bursts from the sides of the hill through deep and narrow chasms, from rock to rock, which are overgrown with wood. The rude and ancient stocks that hang in many parts over the precipices, add much to this picturesque scene, which is still improved by the little mill and its inhabitants in this sequestered bottom.

We proceeded to Bala, and passed the little church of Llangar, and soon

arrived at Llandrillo, a village with a church, seated on the torrent Keidio, at the mouth of a great glen, which extends upwards of two miles, embosomed in the Berwyn mountains, and leads to the noted pass through them called Milldir Gerrig, into the county of Montgomery.

At about a mile distant from Llandrillo, we crossed the Dee at Pont Gilan, a bridge of two arches, over a deep and black water. Beyond this spot the valley acquires new beauties, especially on the right. The road runs at the foot of the brow of a stupendous height, covered with venerable oaks, which have kept their stubborn station amidst the rudest of rocks. Upon the right stand the church and village of Llan-Dderfel, and opposite to this a bridge of four arches. At some distance from it the vale almost closes; and

at Kaletter finishes nobly with a lofty wooden eminence, above which soar the vast mafs of the Aren mountains, notwithstanding they appear immediately after to be very remote.

On the left is Rhiewadog, noted for a battle between Llowarch Hên and the Saxons, in which he loft the laft of his numerous fons. The eftate of Rhiewadog is owned by Mr. Dolbin.

Paſſing by the village and church of Llanvawr, we croſſed the torrent Troweryn, beneath Rhiwlas, the ancient feat of the Prices.

We returned to Bala, and continued our journey on the ſouth ſide of the lake, a moſt beautiful ride, and paſſed by Llanychil church.

We left on the right an ancient feat, Caer Gai, placed on an eminence. Camden ſays, it was a caſtle built by one Caius, a Roman:

the Britons ascribe it to Gai, foster-brother to King Arthur. Returning towards *Caer Gai*, we saw the village and church of *Llan-uwchllyn*.

Close by this village run the *Avon* and *Lliw*. The last rises from two springs, and falls into the former. Those who chuse to derive the *Dee* from its double origin may fix on these: but we meet with a third at the farthest corner of the lake, arising from the neighbourhood of the lofty *Arun*.

Arriving at the foot of *Bwlch y Groes*, or the Pass of the Cross, one of the most terrible in North Wales, the height is gained by going an exceedingly steep and narrow zig-zag path: the pass itself is a dreary, heathy flat, on which it is supposed the cross stood to excite the thanksgiving of travellers for having so well accomplished their arduous

journey. The descent on the other side is much greater, and very tedious, into the long and narrow vale of Mowddwy. It is seven or eight miles long, and so contracted as scarcely to admit a meadow at the bottom. Its boundaries are vast hills generally very verdant, and fine sheep-walks.

In one place to the right the mountains open, and furnish a gap to give sight to another picturesque and strange view, the rugged and wild summit of Aran Mowddwy which soars above with tremendous majesty.

There is a beauty in this vale, which is not frequent in others of those mountainous countries. The enclosures are all divided by excellent quickset hedges, and run far up the sides of the hills, in places so steep as that the common traveller

would scarcely find footing. Numbers of little groves are interspersed, and the hills above them shew a fine turf to the top, where the bog and heath commence, which give shelter to multitudes of red grouse, and a few black.

A new road is now making at this place.

After riding some time along the bottom of the vale, we passed by the village and church of Llan y Mowddwy; and about five miles further we reached Dinas-y-Mowddu, seated on a plain at the junction of three vales. (See page 15.)

We took a delightful walk of about two miles along the vale on the banks of the Dyfi. The valley expands, and the hills sink in height towards the west.

After passing the Dyfi we crossed a bridge over the deep and still water

of the Klywêdog, black as ink, passing sluggishly through a darksome chasm into open day.

We reached Mallwyd, remarkable for the situation of the altar in the middle of the church.

One of the beautiful yew-trees in the church-yard is extremely well worth notice: it is a sort of forest of vast trees, issuing out of one stem, forming a most extensive shade, and magnificent appearance.

Leaving here, we took the road towards Dolgelly; we passed by some deserted lead-mines.

About three miles from Dinas we left on the left hand the vast sheep-farm of Pennant-higi; a deep bottom environed on three sides by vast mountains, forming a noble theatre. We ascended a steep hill into the pass Bwlch Oer-ddrews, and the

country beyond suddenly assumes a new face.

The following interesting account of Dinas-y-Mowddu is given by W. Hutton, Esq. F. A. S. S.

“ I was given to understand, that
“ this place held a considerable emi-
“ nence in the scale of Welsh towns;
“ was the property of the ancient
“ family of *Malton*; that it was one
“ of the five lordships in Wales
“ which were independent manors,
“ and exempted from tribute to the
“ prince; that it held a government
“ within itself, consisting of a mayor
“ and aldermen, with all the mag-
“ nificent *insignia* and ornamental
“ trappings of a corporation. I had
“ observed also its name distin-
“ guished with bold letters in our
“ maps.

“ I wished to visit this favourite
“ place, but my way did not lie
“ through it. Being detained, how-
“ ever, at Mallwyd by the rain, and
“ Dinas Mowddu distant only a
“ mile and a half, I watched the op-
“ portunity of a fair gleam, left the
“ company I accidentally met at the
“ inn to their wine and their conver-
“ sation, and stole a visit to this im-
“ portant place.

“ The situation of Dinas Mowddu
“ is romantic, singular, and beau-
“ tiful, upon a small flat, made by
“ nature, and improved by art, on
“ the declivity of a mountain pro-
“ digiously elevated, and nearly per-
“ pendicular on the left, descending
“ to the town, and on the right con-
“ tinuing the same steep to the river
“ Dovy, which washes its foot. The
“ road winds round the hill in the

“ shape of a bow; the town takes
“ the same curve. It appears to the
“ observer like a town suspended
“ upon the side of a mountain.
“ Curiosity led me to count the
“ houses, which were forty-five. One
“ of these by far the best, is worth,
“ at a fair rent, perhaps, 50s. a
“ year. This I concluded must be
“ the parsonage, for who would deny
“ the best to the priest? But finding
“ there was no church, I understood
“ this mansion was dignified with the
“ Hall.

“ Returning well pleased with
“ my visit, I remarked to my land-
“ lord, a civil intelligent man, that
“ I could not conceive that the whole
“ property of the united inhabitants
“ of this celebrated town exceeded
“ 600l. He assured me it was much
“ less.

“ If care attends multiplicity,
“ these must be a happy people ;
“ their circumscribed stile of ex-
“ istence declares it. As I saw nei-
“ ther a begger nor a person in rags,
“ it corroborates the remark.”

Before us was a vast extent of dreary slope bounded by great rocky mountains, among which Cader Idris soars pre-eminently.

We descended from hence, along very bad stony roads to Dolgelly, every entrance to which is barred by a turnpike, in imitation of other places, and every approach mended for a short space by the help of the scanty tolls. The town is small, the streets disposed in a most irregular manner ; but the situation is in a beautiful vale, fertile, well wooded, and embellished with numbers of pretty seats, watered by

the river Wnion; over which, on account of its floods, is a bridge of several arches.

Cader Idris rises immediately above the town, and is generally the object of the traveller's attention.

On the other side, at nearer distance we saw Craig Cay, a great rock* with a lake beneath lodged in a deep hollow; possibly the crater of an ancient volcano. This is excellently expressed by the admirable pencil of Mr. Wilson.

In descending from the Cader, we kept on the edge of the greater precipice till we came near the Cyfrwy, another peak. The whole space, for a considerable way, was covered with loose stones, in the form of a stream, sloping from the precipitous side.

* See page 18.

We continued our ride beneath Tyrrau Maur, one of the points of Cader Idris, the highest rock I ever rode under. We descended a steep pass through fields, and crossing the river dined on a great stone beneath the vast rock Craig y Deryn, so called from the number of cormorants, rock pigeons, and hawks, which breed on it.

Here the Towyn is contracted into a fertile vale, which extends about two miles further; near its end is a long and high rock, narrow on the top. Here stood the castle of Tiberri, which was cut out of the rock on two sides.

We continued our ride several miles along the pretty vale of Tal y Lyn; very narrow, but consisting of fine meadows bounded by lofty verdant mountains, very steeply sloped.

We went by Llyn y Myngil, a beautiful lake, about a mile long, which so far fills the valley as to leave only a narrow road on one side. Its termination is very picturesque.

A few miles beyond Tal y Llyn church the hills almost meet at their bottoms, and change their aspect. No verdure was now to be seen; but a general appearance of rude and savage nature.

We passed near the Three Grains, which are three vast rocks, the ruins of the neighbouring mountain, which some time or other had fallen into the water.

After descending Bwlch Coch, we again reached Dolgelly crossing the bridge of Llan Ellytd. Below is a fine tract of meadow, wretchedly deformed by the necessity of digging

into it for turf, the fuel of the country. On the left is the church of Llan Ellytd; on the right, in a rich flat, stand the remains of the abbey of St. Cymmer. Part of the church is still to be seen, and shews its ancient grandeur. The great hall, and part of the abbot's lodgings, now form a farm-house.

We continued our journey on a bank high above the Maw. The valley grows soon very contracted; the sides of the hills finely covered with wood almost to the top; the river assumes the form of a torrent, rolling over a rocky channel.

At Dôl y Melynlllyn we turned out of the road, meeting the furious course of the Gamlan, that falls with short interruptions from rock to rock, for a very considerable space, amidst the woods and bushes, till it

reaches a lofty precipice, whence it precipitates into a black pool, which gives to the cataract the name of The Black,

Not far from thence, the junction of the Maw and Eden forms another fine scene. A lofty hill clothed with woods ends here, and forms the forks of the rivers correspondent to the steeps through which these torrents roll, and exhibits a view like those of the shady wilds of America.

In various parts Cader Idris appears in full majesty over these sloping forests, and gives a magnificent finishing to the prospect. Soon after our arrival among the woods, another cascade astonished us with its grandeur. After the water reaches the bottom of the deep concavity, it rushes into a narrow rocky cañon of a very great depth, over which is an

admirable wooden Alpine bridge ;
and the whole, for a considerable way,
awfully canopied by trees.

“ From hence we took the track
“ towards Festiniog, a village in
“ Merionethshire, the vale before
“ which is the most perfectly beau-
“ tiful of all we had seen. From
“ the height of this village you have
“ a view of the sea. The hills are
“ green, and well shaded with wood.
“ There is a lovely rivulet which
“ winds through the bottom ; on
“ each side are meadows, and above
“ are corn-fields along the sides of
“ the hills ; at each end are high
“ mountains which seemed placed
“ there to guard this charming retreat
“ against any invasions. With the
“ woman one loves, with the friend
“ of one’s heart, and a good study
“ of books, one might pass an age
“ there, and think it a day. When

“ we had skirted this *happy vale* an
“ hour or two, we came to a narrow
“ branch of the sea, which is dry at
“ low water. As we passed over the
“ sands, we were surprised to see all
“ the cattle prefer that barren place
“ to the meadows. The guide said
“ it was to avoid a fly which in the
“ heat of the day came out of the
“ woods, and infested them in the
“ vallies.

“ The view of the said sands is
“ terrible, as they are hemmed in on
“ each side with very high hills, but
“ broken into a thousand irregular
“ shapes. At one end is the ocean,
“ at the other the formidible moun-
“ tains of Snowdon, black and naked
“ rocks, which seemed to be piled
“ one above the other; the summits
“ of some of them are covered with
“ clouds, and cannot be ascended.
“ The grandeur of the ocean, cor-

“ responding with that of the moun-
“ tain, formed a majestic and solemn
“ scene ; ideas of immensity swelled
“ and exalted our minds at the sight :
“ all lesser objects appeared mean
“ and trifling, so that we could
“ hardly do justice to the ruins of
“ an old castle, situated upon the top
“ of a conical hill, the foot of which
“ is washed by the sea, and which
“ has every feature that can give a
“ romantic appearance. The morn-
“ ing being fair, we ventured to
“ climb up to the top of a moun-
“ tain, not, indeed, so high as
“ Snowdon, which is here called
“ Moel Guidon, i. e. the nest of
“ the eagle ; but one degree lower
“ than that called Moel Happaek,
“ the nest of the hawk, from whence
“ we saw a phenomenon new to our
“ eyes, but common in Wales ; on
“ the one side was midnight, on the

“ other bright day : the whole ex-
“ tent of the mountain of Snowdon
“ on our left was wrapt in clouds
“ from top to bottom : on the right
“ the sun shone most gloriously over
“ the sea-coast of Caernarvon. The
“ hill we stood upon was perfectly
“ clear, the way we came up a
“ pretty easy ascent ; but before us
“ was a precipice of many hundred
“ yards, and below a vale, which,
“ though not cultivated, has much
“ savage beauty ; the sides were
“ steep, and fringed with low wood.
“ There were two little lakes, or
“ rather large pools, that stood in
“ the bottom, from which issued a
“ rivulet that serpentined in view
“ for two or three miles, and was a
“ pleasing relief to the eyes ; but the
“ mountains of Snowdon, covered
“ with darkness and thick clouds,
“ called to my memory the fall of

"Mount Sinai, with the laws delivered from it, and filled my mind with religious awe." For this animating picture we are indebted to Lord Littleton's *Tour*.

We kept on the side of the hill above the valley that leads to Barmouth, seated near the bottom of some high mountains, and the houses placed on the steep sides, one above another, in such a manner as to give the upper an opportunity of seeing down the chimnies of their next subjacent neighbours. The town is seated very near to the sea, at the mouth of the Maw.

From hence we took the road to Harlech, a small town, remarkable only for its castle, which is seated on a lofty rock, facing the Irish sea, above an extensive marsh once occupied by the water. "Margaret of

“Aujou, the faithful and spirited
“queen of the meek Henry VI.
“found in this castle, in 1460, an
“asylum after the unfortunate bat-
“tle of Northampton.” (See Crate’s
History.)

From Harlech we passed by the village of Llan Tegwyn, and near a small lake, filled with that beautiful aquatic, the water-lily.

Somewhat farther is a lake which well merits the name of fair and lovely, about a mile round, whose waters are of a crystalline clearness.

After a short ride we reached the village and chapel of Maen Twrog, adjoining Tan y Bwlch. Here is a very small neat inn for the reception of travellers, who ought to think themselves much indebted to a nobleman, for the great improvement it received from his munificence.

Above it is a house embosomed with woods, most charmingly situated on the side of the hill.

The river hereabouts widens into a good salmon fishery, and after some space falls into an arm of the sea.

About a mile from Cynfael is a comfortable inn, which received us after our toilsome expedition. After refreshment we descended the long and tedious steep of Bwlch Carreg y Fran, into the narrow vale of Penmachno, and after ascending another hill, turned to the right into the black and moory mountains to visit Lly Conwy, the source of the noted river of that name: it is a very large piece of water, most dismally situated among rock and bog, and the sides very irregularly indented.

We proceeded two or three miles, and reached the village Yfpytty, the

hospital of St. John of Jérusalem, so styled from its having formed, in the then inhospitable country, an asylum and guard for travellers, under the protection of the knights, who held the mannor.

Proceeding, we soon reached the river Conway, and entered into Caernarvonshire.

T O U R
OF
CAERNARVONSHIRE
AND
ANGLESEA.

N

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VI

T O U R
OF
CAERNARVONSHIRE.
AND
ANGLESEA.

CAERNARVONSHIRE is estimated to be sixty miles long; but the breadth in the broadest part does not probably exceed twenty. The inhabitants have been calculated to be twenty thousand.

This county claims precedence to every other in Wales for the loftiness of its mountains, and the multitude of its eminences. They occupy

almost the whole extent, in a curved, ferrated chain, from the promontory of Ormhead easterly to Bardsey Isle. Whilst its fertile vales on the one hand invite you to repose, its huge and savage rocks on the other, generally come home to the feelings of the traveller in an abundant degree. Not a space is there that is not diversified with bare and stupendous elevations, with wide gaping chasms of savage aspect, with pleasing incurvations of some fertility, with rich bottoms, and some abrupt and some gentle slopes and swells. Its antiquity is rather obscure; and the historical accounts of the county, prior to the commencement of the eighth century, furnish no satisfactory register of events. The improved parts of the county now occupy nearly the half of the superficies; and perhaps in ages to come almost

the whole surface, wherever any mould is left, may be brought to a state of artificial pasturage. It was with pleasure we learned that cultivation had of late years been much encouraged in this county. In many places the mountains shew the marks of useful exertion and laudable industry, being considerably cultivated at their bottoms, and ascending gradually upwards, as far as the soil would admit to repay the labour.

The mountains in the space from Conway to Caernarvon seem embosomed in one another, and assume various features; but from the Anglesea shore they put on a more regular appearance, range rising upon range in three gradations, then lost in the distant azure. The lower vallies and sides to the first swell are in general fertile, temperate, and habitable. The second range affords

pasturage and fuel for the poor, such as peat, &c. The highest ridge comprises in it the nature of the frigid zone; the air is keen and rarefied, and snow sometimes prevails there more than half the year. When it rains mildly in the lower districts of the mountain, it oftentimes snows with severity on the heights.

At Llanrwlst, the traveller by way of Shrewsbury first enters this delicious vale: the side down the hill, upon the opening of it, is striking beyond imagination; the Caernarvonshire side, rising suddenly to a great height, impresses the mind not accustomed to abrupt scenes of nature with astonishment and delight. This small town is situated near the southern extremity of the vale on the banks of the river Conway, which divides this county from that of

Denbigh. The place is celebrated for its bridge, which consists of three arches, the middle of which is elliptical, and is the admiration of strangers, and worthy of the great architect Inigo Jones. The town has nothing to boast of in its buildings; the church is a pleasing object, dedicated to St. Rysdyd, A. D. 361, in which are some monuments worth the attention of the curious, particularly that of Llewellyn the Great. The vale, which is of no great extent, widens in succession to its termination at Conway; and a noble river, capable of receiving small craft, runs the whole length of it.

Near Llanbeder, from the road, is seen a roaring cataract; the fall is not altogether perpendicular, but the inclination is nearly so; and the whole body of water, which in floods is considerable, appears all foam,

from its agitation with opposing rocks. On the left is Caerhun, so called from Rhyn ap Maelgwyn Gwyneth, who lived here about the sixth century. Here we tried to find Helen's noted road, but our search was fruitless. We saw a British post of much strength, and singularly guarded. From this hill one way is a wild and barren prospect of rude mountains and stony bottoms; and on the other, the whole extent of the pretty fertile Nant Conway.

At this part of the river, called Tal y Cafn, is a flat ferry conveyance from one shore to the other.

The town of Conway, before noticed, is pleasantly situated on a gentle ascent over the estuary of that name. It is so called from the British words Kyn and Wy, which signify the head or chief river. For a

further account of this place, see Tour from Holyhead.

Though *Snowdon* has been before mentioned, in page 30, the following account is so extremely interesting, the Editor flatters himself it will be acceptable to the reader:

This is the most noted eminence in the whole region of the Welsh hills, and may with propriety be styled the British Alps. The top, by way of pre-eminence, is termed *y Wyddfa*, that is, the *conspicuous*; for from this height the visible horizon cannot be less than a thousand miles. The summit is a plain of about six yards in circumference; and from hence may be seen a part of Ireland, of Scotland, and of England. Cumberland, Lancashire, Cheshire, and all North Wales, the Irish and British seas, and lakes innumerable. Such a bountiful display

of nature at once astonishes and charms the beholder. Tancred Robinson makes the height 1200 yards: but Mr. Pennant, perhaps nearer the truth, sets it at 1189 yards. But what is this altitude to that of Mont Blanc, or Cotopaxi? The former measures two thousand four hundred and twenty-six toises, and the latter three miles perpendicular height. To ascend Snowdon is no easy exercise; it requires some resolution and activity to clamber rocks, and skip over bogs: yet persons on horseback have been known to reach the summit with a degree of safety. All pleasures are attended with fatigue. Once, in ascending this king of hills, I found myself uncommonly weary at the end of the journey: having put on boots for warmth, they not only retarded expedition, but rendered the footing

less firm and secure. The night is usually chosen to begin the ascension, in order to be at the apex at sunrise, which is a prospect uncommonly magnificent, if the morning be clear. I left Caernarvon at five P. M. and arrived leisurely at the base of the mountain a little before eight, in the month of August. The axure now promised no fair weather, it being hazy, and the wind high. However, from this hopeful circumstance I learned some operations of nature, which I should have missed, had the sky appeared without a cloud. Quellyn lake exhibited a surface boisterous to a degree that I had never observed before in fresh water: like a tempestuous sea, the billows foamed and roared. The wind rushing along the interstices of the mountains, and being pent from expanding, exerted itself

in an incredible degree of fury. Here one had no occasion

—————“to invoke the winds
“To break the toils where strangled vapours lie.”

Storms frequently prevail in the defiles of the mountains; the wind rushing between them through a narrow channel, at once increases in speed and density. I rested the beginning of the night at a small farmhouse among the rocks: to begin to ascend it was too soon. At twelve P. M. I eagerly proceeded with a guide, and arrived at the top, without any material occurrence of observation, about three in the morning. The dawn of day now appeared, and there was something very awful and impressing in the situation. Nature looked tremendous and frowning, and the atmosphere was every moment putting on a different aspect:

at one instant the sky was clear, the next overcast with clouds: now a misty rain, then fair weather. The transition was uncommonly quick and preceptible, until the sun became visible in the horizon. Never shall I forget the horror and the pleasure I then felt. He appeared to come forth from the ocean in fiery redness, and like a giant to run his course. A pure azure for a few minutes now displayed itself with refulgent beauty. The clouds were forming fast underneath, and the wind being brisk, soon carried them over head: and with such rapidity were they impelled from the great chasm of Llanberris, that they seemed to rise like smoke out of a great furnace. Now and then the beams or rays of the sun darted from between the clouds like lightning, flashing upon the adverse rocks. The multitude

of lakes in these mountains, and the humidity of the soil, being on these phenomena. When the sun had ascended some degrees, the sky brightened; but the exhaled vapours appeared visible, and sometimes are so through the course of the day. Goats are not unfrequent on some of the most inaccessible cliffs, and sheep on all easy acclivities. Though you are here within an hour's ride of an hospitable and social people, yet the ideas of waste and solitude unavoidably prevail. The elevation of your footing is so unusual to the mind, that while you survey the amazing prospect with astonishment and admiration, you tremble at the contemplation of the slippery situation you are in. Anglesea displays or unfolds itself to you like a map, and you can plainly discern its windings, crooks, and bays. Man's power is

diminished, and even debased in his own eyes, at the grandeur and greatness of the scenes before him.

About six miles from Caernarvon is Llanberris. The upper and lower lakes are separated by a meadow; and on a craig are seated the ruins of Polbadern castle, at the foot of which flows the river; that rising in the upper end of Llanberris vale, passes through the lakes, and falls into the Menai at Caernarvon.

Llanberris is a very picturesque vale, bounded by the base of Snowdon. The venerable oaks spoken of by Leland are now no more.

One of the curiosities of Caernarvonshire is Pont Aberglaslyn, a bridge which joins this county to Merionethshire. It is remarkable for a falmon-leap close by it, and famous for its site, being an arch thrown from one hill to another.

The country hereabouts is uncommonly romantic and wild, rising on either side into abrupt precipices; and the noise of the river, in the wintry deluge, is uncommonly loud, though the stream in its usual progress is never very silent and placid, from the number of dark loose blocks of stone in every direction of the river, hurled into it from the circumjacent hills. The road from Caernarvon to the bridge, the distance about twelve miles, is hard, spacious, and sufficiently level for wheel-carriages; in consequence of which, and the picturesque scenes all along the ride, the place is much resorted to in the summer season.

The church of Beddgelert, a small neat structure, is situated close to the river, and surrounded by towering mountains. Behind the public house, opposite a mill, is a grand sublime

view of the variegated face of nature. To the east is a solemn hollow, rugged with rocks, and savage with huge excrescences. The eye, in the survey of this horrid chasm, is relieved now and then by spots of verdure, by patches of heath, by thinly scattered sheep, and by the beautiful curvature of the mountain. This is an excellent stand to take a landscape of naked nature; having received no embellishment from the industry of man, it exhibits a surface desolate and deserted. It is probable this part of the country was covered with trees, which were a covert for wolves, and other beasts of the forest; as in the Welsh annals this region is styled the forest of Snowdon.

The mountains of Caernarvonshire run in a bent line from sea to sea. The east point is a headland, called

Ormshead, the west Aberdaron. The defiles and openings that give these mountains a passage, have all been strongly fortified, either with castles, towers, or forts. Degánwy castle stands at the opening at Conway; Caerhun at the pass of Bwlch y Ddau Vaen, with a fort below it at Aber; Dol y Felin castle and a watch-tower at Nant Frankon; Dolbadern at Nant Peris: at Criccieth is a strong castle; and at Castell Gyfarch a watch-tower; and a fort at Dolbenmaen.

There are two grand ridges of mountains in North Wales, running due north and south—the Snowdon chain, and that of Cader Idris, the highest and interior peaks of which consist of primitive rocks of granite, porphyry, serpentine, and hornblend: then come the secondary, as slates; these are terminated by the

derivative mountain of lime and sandstone.

There is not the least appearance of the effects of volcanic fire in all Wales, nor the smallest specimens of lava, cellular or compact pumice, to be found. All the Welsh mountains evince a Neptunian origin. Some decomposed stones about Cader Idris have been mistaken for volcanic products.

All mountains are abundant in springs and rivers; and the reason is obvious. Their power of attraction, and degree of cold, is considerable, and in proportion to their height; they intercept the flying vapours and clouds, which are condensed; water rushes down their sides, and forms lakes of great depth; and from these conservatories rivers are formed; or else insinuating itself between the strata, forms springs.

South-west of Caernarvon are those very observable hills called Rivles. They are all conical, and of great height: they extend in a beautiful towering order, almost to the western extremity of the county.

The air of the upper mountains is keen, and oftentimes piercing: the vallies are more temperate: and about the skirts of the hills and near the influence of the sea air, it is milder still. Snow seldom continues long in the lower regions; in the higher regions it usually maintains a contest with the sun for more than six months in the year.

The weather in North Wales is very changeable, and subject to heavy rains, as all mountainous countries on the side of the tropics are: yet the variations of the thermometer is never great; 30 usually is the lowest, and 75 the highest; a

difference of 45 only: the medium is 44.

Dinas Dinlle, about four miles south-west of Caernarvon, is an artificial mount of gravel and earth, close to the sea shore. This is conjectured to have been a British camp or fortification; but Mr. Pennant judges it to have been a Roman fortress; and, to corroborate this supposition, a coin of Alecctus was found here.

Clynog.—This place is famous for having been a college, which was founded by Beuno, son of Bavagius. King Cadwallader and Prince Anarawd were considerable benefactors to the church, which is gothic, and the most handsome in the county; the architecture, though upon a smaller scale than that of Bangor, seems superior to the cathedral in style of building.

As this village is about midway between the towns of Caernarvon and Pwllheli, it has one tolerable good inn. The country from hence to Pwllheli is, in general, dreary and barren, but with here and there a gentleman's house, around which the ground for a little way puts on a more cultivated appearance; yet, on the whole, sterility seems visible. The pass to the entrance of Llyn is called Drws Daufyndd, a narrow avenue defended by two lofty mountains. A. D. 945, Alibock wasted this country; and again, soon after, Constantine with the Danes ravaged it; and at a place called Gwaith Hirberth the Danes were overthrown, and Constantine was slain.

The town of Pwllheli is the best in this county, situated close to the sea, and consists of one main street and some lanes: it is a place of con-

siderable trade in corn, butter, cheese, &c. and has the cheapest market of any sea-port town in North Wales. It has a tolerable harbour for vessels of about sixty tons.

This place was made a free borough by the Black Prince, by charter, dated the 12th year of his principality at Caernarvon.

At the distance of five miles from hence is Carn Madryn, a lofty rocky hill, noted for being a strong-hold of O. Gwyned, to whom this part of the country belonged. From the summit is an extensive view of Caernarvon and the country round.

At Penmorfa several antiquities are scattered about this part of the country. Near Dolbenmaen is a large mount, on which, it is conjectured, there has been a watch-tower. Near Ystemgegid are three cromlechs; and in the neighbour-

hood of Clennenny is a druidical circle, consisting of thirty-eight stones.

Nafyn is a small market town on the sea coast. Here King Edward the First, in 1284, held his triumph on the *conquest of Wales*. The concourse of visitors was prodigious; not only the chief nobility of England, but numbers from foreign courts, graced the festival.

Dugdale says, besides this festival held at Nafyn, another was presented by the Earl of Mortimer at Kenilworth, where the knights performed their martial exercise, and the ladies danced in filken mantles.

At a small distance from hence is Vortigern's Valley, an immense hollow, where, it is said, he fled from the rage of his subjects, and that both he and his castle were consumed by lightning. Fancy cannot frame

a place of deeper *solitude* for him who may wish to retreat from the world and society. Had *Zimmerman* seen it his heart might have been dilated, if it had afforded no new idea to his mind, on a subject he has so happily discussed*. The herring fishery is carried on here to considerable advantage.

We passed by *Slymlyn*, the seat of — *Wynne, Esq.* and arrived at *Crickieth*, a small borough town, contributory to *Caernarvon*: it has a castle, supposed to be founded by *Edward the First*, which is seated on a round hill jutting far into the sea, and the isthmus is crossed by two deep ditches. On either side of the entrance is a great round tower: its supposed founder is *Edward the First*, but *Mr. Pennant* suspects it to be of British architecture.

* See *Zimmerman* on *Solitude*.

Evioneth is a hundred of the south-west of Caernarvonshire: it is supposed to have obtained this name from its being watered by a number of small rivers.

Bardsey Island is situated at the extremity of Caernarvonshire, celebrated in former times as a religious asylum: it is about two miles in circumference, and contains a few inhabitants. The abbot house is a large stone building, inhabited by several of the natives. The whole island's spiritual concerns are now supplied by one person only—strange fatality! when we read that this once celebrated place afforded an asylum to 20,000 saints, and after death graves for the same. Dr. Fuller, with pleasantry, observes, “it would be more facile to find
“graves in Bardsey for so many
“saints, than saints for so many

"graves." The slaughter of the monks of Bangor, about the year 607, is supposed to have contributed to the population of this island, numbers having fled here to avoid the fury of the Saxons. Here a beautiful red stone is dug, which will take a fine polish.

The productions of Caernarvonshire are neither very abundant nor various, yet more than sufficient, with good husbandry, to supply the inhabitants. The soil for the most part is raw and shallow: even the vallies and bottoms seem to be only the shattered refuse of the mountains, consisting chiefly of loose stones, some earth, and some vegetable remains. Where the land is thoroughly manured and meliorated, it produces good corn.

The Welsh music is harmonious, but plaintive, slow, and affecting.

The tunes are chiefly composed to celebrate the glory of the heroes of their country, or to bewail their losses, and to stir up a spirit of liberty in the people. Although alliteration is a characteristic of the Welsh song, they have very few tunes in allegro.

Of instruments, the harp, the crowd, and pib-corn, are peculiar to the Welsh. The first needs no description; the second is similar to the bass-viol, but with six strings, and played with the bow in the same manner; the pib-corn is a fluted bore, with six stops, and a hollow horn at each end; the mouth-piece is a reed or quill: the tone has some affinity to that of the bagpipe.

Of minstrels there were three sorts formerly in Wales: first, the bards, who composed songs and odes of various measures; second, such as

played upon musical instruments; third, *Ataniad*, whose business it was to sing to the instrument played upon by another: each of these Grif-fydd ap Conan, about A. D. 1136, reformed and corrected.

A N G L E S E A

ANGLESIA, with its capital the
 Isle of Man, have been thought
 to be the British Islands and the
 British Islands to much talked of
 the ancients. The general name
 Mona, imports both a solitary place
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ISLE

OF

ANGLESEA.

ANGLESEA, with her sister, the Isle of Man, have been thought to be the Elyfian Fields and Fortunate Islands so much talked of by the ancients. The general name, Mona, imports both a solitary place, and furthestmost island. The language first brought over to the island of Albion, probably continued in it for many ages after, and consequently must be the first language used and spoken in the Isle of Anglesea. This was anciently, by Latin writers, called Mona, is an

island, and one of the counties of North Wales, according to the present division, separated from the main land by a narrow arm of the sea. It is seated in a temperate air, enlivened by a benign sun, and enriched with a good and bountiful soil. It is now become so great a thoroughfare from Ireland, and has so much business of its own, that the roads are in general very good, and (what is unusual in Wales) the traveller often meets with direction-posts in the divisions of the road. The face of the island is but little interesting to the traveller, though it affords a rich harvest to the mineralogist.

Porth Althwy, the most general ferry into Anglesea, is immediately below the church.

The following beautiful lines open with a view of the druidical remains:

Sweet are the peaceful shades, to memory dear,
And sweet the note that melts on Fancy's ear;
Shades, from the FANE on yonder hill survey'd,
And chearful notes that echoed from the glade.
Seen from yon central stone, a varied scene
Of hill and dale, with waving woods between,
O'erspread with flowers of many a beauteous dye,
Holds in delighted gaze the lingering eye,
Time-hallow'd pile, by simple builders rear'd!
Mysterious round, through distant times rever'd!
Ordain'd with earth's revolving orb to last!
Thou bring'st to sight the present and the past.

We cannot, perhaps, fix upon any particular time, as the æra of the druidical establishment, either in Britain, or any other country. Was this a proper place for the discussion of so complicated a subject, it might perhaps, admit of no difficult proof that the vast body of men, known by the designations of Brachmans, Celtes, Druids, &c. although spread over regions the most distant from each other, were all properly members of one great society, united in

the belief of certain principles, whereby they are particularly distinguished. At the time when the world was peopled by the descendants of *Noah*, it is natural to suppose that his posterity preserved, in their various migrations, some part of those doctrines which he might have taught them. And it would have been strange if these original truths had not been debased and disfigured, during the course of many ages, by foreign intermixtures. The great doctrines of the unity of God, and of his perfections; of the creation of the world within a fixed period, and of its tendency to dissolution; not to mention many others which might be enumerated; characterized the various classes above mentioned, and were most probably coeval in the minds of men with the earliest ages of population. (See

Diog. Laert. in proem. Hyde de Relig. Strabo, lib. 4.) Even those observances and tenets which are properly *druidical* in the general estimation, as the veneration of the oak, and the belief of the metempsychosis, may be traced to periods of the most remote antiquity. If we give credit to Herodotus, the doctrine of a metempsychosis had its origin in Egypt, at a very early period. It seems to follow from these observations, that the first inhabitants of the British isles either brought along with them the principal druidical tenets, at the time when they peopled the country, or adopted these soon after their arrival. At any rate, there is not the least reason to believe that any part of the religious system of the Druids was borrowed from that of the

Greeks and Romans. (Vid. Univ. Ancient Hist. vol. 18. and auct. ibi citat.

Of the various etymologies of the term *Druid* (etymologies with which learned men appear to be fond of amusing themselves and their readers), the most probable appears to be, that of deriving this appellation from the word *Deru*, which among the ancient Britons signified an oak. There is a striking similitude in the sounds of these words, as there is likewise in the Greek word *Drus*, which has the same signification, and, in Pliny's estimation, is the original of the term. (Plin. Nat. Hist.) Be that as it may, we are certain that the Druids venerated this sacred tree above all others; as containing virtues of sovereign and of peculiar efficacy. They believed not only

that God had chosen the oak as the place of his more immediate residence; but that every thing belonging to it came from heaven. Its fruit, and in particular the substance called the *mistletoe*, which sometimes grows at the extremity of its branches, they conceived to have a divine virtue, from which both man and beast received benefit, in every disease of whatever nature. They therefore held their religious assemblies under this tree; sprinkled its leaves over their feasts; and wore small boughs of it at all their sacred ceremonies. (Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist.)

With respect to the ideas which the Druids entertained concerning the divine perfections and providence, nothing needs to be added to the testimony of Tacitus, in his work *De Moribus Germanorum*, to which the reader, who may want

information on this subject, is referred. Their number, agreeable to an ancient author, was supposed to be 20,000.

The Druids were divided properly into three classes. These were the Vacerri, the Bardi, and the Eubages. Of those, the Bardi or Bards held the second place after the sacred ministers of religion; and were respected by the people in general as persons of eminent dignity and use in the community. Their office was to record the great actions of illustrious men, in order to excite their successors to an imitation of their example. They were not exempted from this duty even in battle, wherein they mixed promiscuously with the combatants, in order to encourage them to fight with intrepidity and perseverance. Tacitus informs us, that the wo-

men, upon these occasions, exposed themselves to equal hazards as the soldiers.

The account he also gives us of the expedition of Suetonius against this island is the most striking picture of the character of the Druids, and probably more to be relied upon than any other.

The shore from Porthamel is famed for being the place where he landed, and put an end in this island to the Druid reign.

The Danes frequently invaded Anglesea; and between the years 969 and 972, Godfryd, the son of Harold, subdued the whole island.

Our knowledge of the Druids is still vague and unsatisfying, and must ever remain so, as they committed few things, if any, to writing, though they were certainly not unacquainted with letters; for,

among the maxims collected by Gollet, there is one that forbids their mysteries to be written, a prohibition which could never have been given, had letters been entirely unknown: some curious particulars, however, may at least be traced from tradition, and others from specimens of their poetry that have been recited by the natives. As guardians, of what they called true religion, they of course possessed the greatest authority among the people: no laws were instituted by the princes without their advice. They taught the immortality, and some say the transmigration of the soul; a doctrine borrowed from the Pythagoreans, though Clemens Alexandrinus expressly asserts that the Pythagoreans borrowed that doctrine from them.

Once a year they, with their chief, an Arch-Druid, assembled at a fixed time and place to hear causes and determine all disputes; where their decisive court was held has never been determined, but most probably in Anglesea, as that island was certainly their metropolis. So great was the power of the Druids, that not only the property, but also the lives of the people were entirely at their disposal; and this power continued absolute till the time of Tiberius: it was afterwards suppressed by Claudius, under the fair pretext of abolishing human sacrifices; but the priests themselves, their gods, and their altars, subsisted, though in obscurity, till the final destruction of Paganism.

Very few traces of the temples and habitations of the Druids are now to

be found; some old stones, shapeless and without order, here and there, indicate that there might have stood on these spots the rude and simple piles where the primæval inhabitants of this island solemnized their religious ceremonies; and this is all that now remains of that once celebrated order of priesthood, which overspread the northern regions of Europe. Strange fatality! that little more than a few shapeless stones, and the uncertain testimony of oral tradition, remain to satisfy us of the influence that extraordinary religion once possessed over the human mind.

At Tre'r Dryw, or the habitation of the *Arch-Druid*, we met with the mutilated remains described by Mr. Rowland in his History of Anglesea. His Brein Gwyn, or royal tribunal, is a circular hollow of 180 feet in diameter, surrounded by an

immense agger of earth and stones, evidently brought from some other place: it has only a single entrance. This is supposed to be the grand consistory of the druidical administration.

Here are also the reliques of a circle of stones, with the cromlech in the midst, but all extremely imperfect.

Their ceremonies, according to Tacitus, were performed “in groves,
“sacred to the most cruel superstitions; for they offered up their sacrifices upon altars stained with
“the blood of their captives; and it
“was usual for them to augur according as the blood of the human
“victim followed the sacred knife
“that had inflicted the wound.”

While others fell, by turns disgrac'd,
Their names dishonour'd, and their forms defac'd,
The BARDS in slaughter's desolating hour
Still held their office, and retain'd their power.

On heights dispers'd, or wand'ring o'er the plain,
They brought from hill and dale a list'ning train;
Lur'd by soft numbers, and the powers of sound,
Thy sons informing Nature pour'd around!

The Bards continued to be held in reverence, and even to enjoy peculiar privileges, during many ages after the abolition of the other druidical establishments. The great historian *Bede* informs us, that even in his time the persons of the Bards were accounted sacred, and that their houses were sanctuaries in all that part of the island wherein the ancient language of the Britons continued to be spoken; that, respected by all parties, they had liberty to pass and repass at pleasure through countries at war with each other: that they were received by the nobles with honour, and were generally dismissed with donations, &c. (*Bede, lib. 2.*)

Though Anglesea is called the granary of Wales, it appeared to us as unworthy the appellation; for twenty miles of our road through it, we could not discover more than five or six corn-fields, and the grass lands so miserably poor, that it starved rather than fed its hungry inhabitants. We undoubtedly did not see the country to the best advantage, because the excessive heat of the summer had parched up the ground, and occasioned a general appearance of dearth.

Newborough about three miles from the shore, is a place greatly fallen away from its ancient splendour. Here had been one of the residences of the princes. This was also the seat of justice for the whole county of Menai. Edward I. erected the town into a corporation, which

was confirmed by Edward III. From this time it was called Newborough.

Amlwch is a considerable town and small sea-port on the coast. Thirty years ago there were not six houses in the parish, though it is now supposed to contain near 4000 inhabitants. They are also erecting a church here. The copper that is found in the Paris and Mona mines, which are not more than two miles from the town, is shipped to London, Liverpool, &c. The Mona mine produces the finest oar; they also precipitate large quantities of copper by means of old iron, from the water which runs through the ore, and which is collected in pits. (For a particular account of the whole process, the reader may consult the Encyclopædia Britannica, and Mr. Pennant's History of Wales.) There is no difficulty in distin-

guishing this celebrated mountain, being perfectly barren from the summit to the plain below; not a shrub, and scarce a blade of grass, being able to live in this sulphurous atmosphere.

At Llanidan is the seat of Lord Boston, finely situated on that arm of the sea, commanding, upwards, a beautiful prospect of Caernarvon and Snowden hills. The church adjacent was built in 1535.

Plas Newyd, the seat of Lord Uxbridge, lies close upon the water, protected on three sides by venerable oaks and ashes. The view up and down this magnificent river-like strait, is extremely fine.

A little below Plas Newyd, on the Caernarvonshire side appear the extensive woods of Vaenol, with the old house of the same name.

At Craig y Ddinas we were irresistibly delayed by feasting our eyes with the fine view of the noble curvature of the *Menai*. The parts adjacent to the *Menai* are finely wooded, but the trees commonly shrink from the south-west, and many of them are entirely blighted from that quarter. The interior of the island is rather naked, but breeds many cattle and sheep.

The Caernarvonshire mountains we had lately quitted extend all across the county, from Penmaen-mawr to Traeth-mawr, in one continued chain, whose outline is varied at irregular intervals by conical peaks, towering above the rest; these gradually rise to the summit of Snowdon, and again as gradually decline, till they terminate all together in the northern horn of Cardigan Bay. The *Menai* at high water is about one mile broad.

We dined at Gwyndu, on the great road to Holyhead, which is called by the natives *Caer Guby*, on account of *St. Kibi*, a holy man, who lived there A. D. 308. We left it on the right, and steered our course nearly south, through the centre of the island. *Gwyndu* signifies, from its name, a place of hospitality at the expence of the lord; and it answers, in some respects, to its title even now; nor must we forget to pay our tribute of thanks to the host, who paid us the utmost attention, and appeared particularly felicitous about us. We left this hospitable inn with regret, and arrived at *Hoel Don Ferry*, which we crossed, after a sleepless night, happy to quit this rather inauspicious island.

T O U R

FROM

SHREWSBURY TO OSWESTRY,

ELLESMERE, BANGOR, MOLD,

AND

F L I N T.

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T O U R

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST

BY JOHN BURNET

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T O U R
FROM
SHREWSBURY TO OSWESTY,
ELLESMERE, BANGOR, MOLD,
AND
FLINT.

THE town of Shrewsbury is seated within a peninsula, with ground finely sloping in most parts to the river. The castle was judiciously placed on a narrow isthmus 200 yards wide, which connects it to the main land: Roger de Montgomery made this his principal seat. The town was not defended by walls till the year 1219, nor paved until the next reign, by the assistance of certain customs granted for that pur-

pose. In almost every part the original walls were at a distance from the river. Those on the south-east side of the town are kept in good repair, and form pleasant but interrupted walks, by reason of flights of steps. This town had for many ages been the capital of POWISLAND, and the seat of the princes. In the time of Edward the Confessor it had only two hundred and fifty-two houses. The manufactures are but inconsiderable, but it draws very great profit from those of Montgomeryshire, this place being the chief mart for them. The free-school stands near the castle in a broad handsome street; it was founded by Edward VI. in 1552. Two bridges connect this peninsula with the country. The *Welsh Bridge* is a very ancient structure of six arches, with an handsome embattled gateway at

one end. On the side of the river stood the great mitred abbey of *St. Peter and St. Paul*, founded, in 1083, by *Roger Earl of Shrewsbury*. Quarry Walk has always been greatly admired, and forms a charming promenade; it surrounds a field sloping to the side of the Severn, well shaded by stately woods. From the mount of the castle you have a beautiful view of the whole town, with the Severn, and its meandering course. There are many other historical evidences of the antiquities of the town, for more particulars of which I must refer the reader to *Philips's History of Shrewsbury*.

Near the town is the Upper and Lower Berwick; one the seat of — *Betton, Esq.* the other of *T. Powis, Esq.* both commanding delicious views of the river and town of Shrewsbury.

The ride from Shrewsbury to Oswestry is, in many parts, picturesque and beautiful. Those mountains, that have often terrified from their stupendous height, now break forth with awful and sublime effect upon the eye of the traveller, whilst the fertile vales, screened from the tempest, bud and blossom at their feet,

“Wasting their sweetness on the desert air.”

GRAY.

About eight miles distance from Shrewsbury is Nesccliffe, a small village, situated at the foot of some freestone rocks.

A little further on the road are fine views of the three Beddins hills, rising abruptly from the plain to the height of about one thousand feet, marking the boundary between the counties of Montgomery and Salop:

on the summit of the largest hill stands a column, which was erected to record the splendid victory of Admiral Rodney over the French fleet, 1782. At a small distance, on the left of the road, is the Hill of Llanymyneck, remarkable for a fine prospect, but better worth notice as containing by far the most extensive lime-works of any in this part of the country. This hill ascends gradually out of the plain of Shrewsbury.

Oswestry.—A considerable town, about two miles distant from Whittington, a place celebrated in Saxon history and legendary piety. On this spot on August 5, 642, was fought the battle between the Christian Oswald, king of the Northumbrians, and the Pagan Penda, king of the Mercians. Oswald was defeated and lost his life. At present,

there is not a relique of any old building, excepting the ruins of a chapel, over a remarkably fine spring, that still bears the name of the saint: near the church is a spot moated round, the use of which is now quite unknown. The present church is of no great antiquity, is spacious, and has an handsome plain tower. We learn from a monument in memory of Mr. Hugh Yale, that the old church was demolished in 1616. The town was fortified with a wall and four gates; that called the Black Gate is demolished; the New Gate, the Willow Gate, and the Beatrice Gate, still remain. The last is an handsome building, with a guard-room on both sides; and over it the arms of the Fitz-alans, a lion rampant. There are only a few fragments of the castle remaining to mark its fallen state, and to call to

our recollection the departure of its former greatness.

Hanymynech is prettily situated on the banks of the Virnwy.

Sir William Dugdale says, that there was a castle at Oswaldſter, at the time of the conquest, which is probable; and it had its chapel placed at a little distance, dedicated to Saint Nicholas, and was in the gift of the Earls of Arundel. This town was garrisoned for the King in the beginning of the civil wars, but was taken in June 1644 by the Earl of Denbigh and General Mytton; men eminent for military knowledge.

About a mile from Oswestry, in the parish of Sellatyn, lies a fine ancient military post on an eminence, of an oblong form, which has been fortified with much art.

In Sellatyn parish is Parkington, the seat of R. G. Owen, Esq. pleasantly situated, and well wooded. This place takes its name from a singular entrenchment in a neighbouring field. Sir J. Owen, the famous royalist, was of this house, but not of the family.

From Oswestry we continued our journey to Ellesmere, a pleasing ride. From an eminence called the Perthy, we had a most extensive view of the flat part of the country, bounded by the hills of Denbighshire, Montgomeryshire, and Shropshire: amidst them appear the vast gaps through which the Severn and the Dee rush upon the plains out of their mountainous confinement. This track is intermixed with woods, fertile lands, and moors of great extent.

Alston is situated on an elevated spot of ground; a very extensive

wood flanks each side of the house, which is bounded by a fine piece of water, made by extending the banks of the river Perry.

Ellesmere is a town situated on a lake of an hundred and one acres in dimension, and whose greatest depth is twenty-six yards, well stocked with fish. The Duke of Bridgewater owns this fine water.

The environs have two advantages superior to the other lakes. A good town borders on one side; the fine park of Ockle, or Ollby, with the venerable wooden house, is a great ornament to the other.

The park is covered with trees of great size and ancient growth. A vast lime tree, of the small-leaved variety, is particularly conspicuous. The ground is finely broken into several risings, and the views charming, of the town, of the mere, and

of the two others, Whilemere and Colemere. The situation, taken all together, may be looked upon as a first rate, and particularly desirable.

The town is of Saxon origin, and takes its name from the water, which was called Aelfmere.

The castle stood on a vast artificial mount, on a high ground, with three large ditches on the more accessible side; of which, at present, there is not a vestige to be seen.

Our next stage was to Overton, a pleasant village, seated on a rising bank. About a mile beyond the bridge, above a rich meadowy flat, varied by the Dee, you have a charming view; bounded in front with fertile and wooded slopes, while the lofty and naked mountains soar beyond and close the delightful scene.

In 1278, in the reign of Edward the First, it was in possession of

Robert de Crevecœur, who obtained for it a weekly market, held on a Wednesday. There are no reliques of its fallen castle, which stood in a field, still called Castlefield to this day. The church is an handsome building, and the church-yard reckoned among the wonders of Wales, on account of its handsome yew-trees, which are ranged in the most regular order that can be conceived round the church-yard. The epitaphs here are numerous, and many, from their singular composition, would afford the traveller some amusement.

Mr. Fletcher's feat called Gwern-hailed, in this parish, must not pass unnoticed. Few places command so fine a view, and few have been more judiciously improved; it stands on the lofty brow that skirts the country; beneath runs the river Dee,

bounded on the opposite side by beautiful meadows, and varied in the distance by a number of hills, some of small and others of considerable magnitude.

About five miles from Overton is Bangor, seated also on the banks of the Dee, which is here bounded on both sides by rich meadows. The church has been built at various times, no part of which is very ancient; nor does it particularly arrest the attention. This place is, however, celebrated for being the site of the most ancient British monastery, or rather seminary, in England or Wales; it was supposed to contain two thousand four hundred monks, who, dividing themselves into seven bands, passed their time alternately in prayer and labour. William of Malmesbury, the celebrated monk, cotemporary with King Stephen,

speaks of the remains in his days, saying, "That no place could show
" greater remains of half-demolished
" churches, and multitudes of other
" ruins, that were to be seen in his
" time in Bangor."

This place has also been the site of the supposed Bonium, or Bovium, a Roman station. Leland says, that in his time Roman money was found here. The bridge is a beautiful light structure, and consists of five arches.

On the road from hence to Wrexham stands Marchwail, celebrated for its antiquity: and after a short ride we arrived at Wrexham. (Vide page 106.)

From Wrexham to Caergwrle the traveller will find much to arrest the eye in the beauty of the scenery; Wales here puts on a less formidable appearance. Cultivation and the

hand of labour have done much for this part of the country, to render it a very desirable situation.

Caergwrle is a village on the banks of the Alun, the form of which speaks it to have been a Roman station, which, to the antiquarian eye, is evident. The castle stood on the summit of a great rock; precipitous on one side, and of steep ascent on the others. Some of the walls and part of a round tower still remain, sufficient to show that its size was never great. It is probable this castle was one of the few Welsh fortresses that we have to boast of. Here Eleanora the Queen of Edward I. lodged in her way to Caernarvon, where her husband sent her to give the Welsh a ruler born among them. The village and church of Hope lie about a mile from the castle. On the north side of the stream, west of

the castle, on a lofty hill, is Bryne Yorkyn, the paternal seat of Ellis Yonge, Esq. The first charter given to Hope was by Edward the Black Prince, dated from Chester, 1351. Caergwrle with Hope is a prescriptive borough.

Abundance of limestone is burnt into lime on Caergwrle hill, a lofty mountain, composed of that species of stone, from which a vast trade is carried into Cheshire and other places. From hence to Mold you pass Leefwood the seat of the late R. Hill Waring, Esq. charmingly situated and well wooded. Mold is a small neat town, consisting principally of one handsome street, on a gentle rising, in the midst of a small but rich plain. The church is placed on an eminence, and is of the time of Henry VII.: it has of late years been adorned with a handsome steeple.

The architecture of the church is of the Gothic, of the beginning of the sixteenth century; the windows large, and their arches obtuse. The same may be observed of the old building over St. Winifrede's well, at Holywell. The mount is now called the Bailey-hill. It appears to have been strongly fortified by great ditches, notwithstanding its arduous ascent. The summit of this hill commands a short but most exquisite view of the circumjacent vale; and to the west, Moel-famma rises with awful preheminance among the Clwydian hills. Powell says that "The first certain account that we have of this place is in the reign of William Rufus, when we find it in possession of Eustua Cruer, who then did homage for Mold and Hopedale;" and he further adds, "That much of the country was

“ (in the reign of Edward I.) so covered with woods, that before his conquest of Wales, he was obliged to cut a passage through them, in the tract between Mold and a place then called Swerdewood.” About a mile west of the town is Maes Garman, a spot that retains the name of the faintly commander, in the celebrated battle, the Victoria Alleluatica, fought in 420 between the Britons and Saxons, who were carrying desolation through the country. Not far from Mold stands Givysaney; a most respectable old house, beautifully situated: it was of strength sufficient to be garrisoned in the time of the civil wars, and was taken on the 12th of April 1645. Here also the county assizes are held.

Cambria here lays aside her majestic air, and condescends to assume a gentler form.—We for some time

hung over the charming vale which opens with exquisite beauty from *Fron*, the paternal estate of the Rev. Mr. Williams, delightfully situated, commanding a rich prospect of well-cultivated lands.

Northope, a small town, bears the addition of *North*, to distinguish it from the other *Hope*. The church is a neat structure, and the tower lofty and handsome.

Between the eight and nine milestone, at a small distance out of the Chester road, are the ruins of Eulo castle, placed on the edge of a deep wooded dingle. It is a small fortress, consisting of two parts; the towers of which are finely overgrown with creeping ivy, and command the view of three wooded glens, deep and darksome, forming the most gloomy solitude a human mind can conceive.

In the woods near this place Henry the Second, in 1157, lost part of the flower of his army, being surpris'd and defeated by David and Conan.

From hence we pass'd on to Flint, a distance of about five miles; this town being seated on a flat beside the river Mersey, and well wooded, is not so much expos'd in the tempestuous seasons of the year, to suffer cold in any degree equal to other towns in North Wales, whilst the gentle sea breeze renders it particularly wholesome.

The town, in conjunction with Caerws, Ruddlan, Caergwrle, and Overton, sends a member to parliament; the election is made by the inhabitants paying parochial taxes, and the return made by the two bailiffs of Flint, appointed by the mayor: the borough land of this town extends over the whole parish.

and also the township of Coleshill in the parish of Holywell. The Welsh boroughs and counties received the privilege of representatives by act of parliament of the 27th of Henry VIII.

Although this be the county town, it has suffered itself to be surpassed by the town of Holywell; it is doubtless capable of great improvements, and why not establish manufacturies here? In this place, emulation may be said to sleep, and leave the gifts of fortune to be reaped by her neighbours.

A modern historian has given us the following curious particulars relative to this shire :

When our first invaders landed on *Great Britain*, *North Wales* was possessed by the *Ordovices*, a name derived from the language of the country, signifying the situation, being almost entirely bounded by

the river *Diva*, or the modern *Dee*. The spirit which the people shewed at the beginning, did not desert them to the last. Notwithstanding they were obliged to submit to the resistless power of the Romans, though they sunk beneath the pressure of the new invaders; they preserved an undaunted courage amidst their native rocks, and received among them the gallant fugitives, happy in congenial souls. The hardy *Saxons*, for above three centuries, could not make an impression even on the low lands. *Offa* was the first who extended his kingdom for some miles within these borders. His conquest was but temporary; for the Welsh possessed *Chester*, till the year 883, when it was wrested from them by the able *Egbert*.

It may be remarkd, that, contrary to what happens to most subdued nations, the Welsh preserved its native Language, and the conquerors even deigned to adopt the names of the *British* towns and people, latinizing them from the original words.

The first notice of any subdivision of the tract called *Flintshire*, appears in the *Doomsday* book. When that survey was taken, it was a part of *Cheeshire*, to which it was considered as an appendage, by conquest. Old records affirm, that the county of *Flint* appertaineth to the dignity of the sword of *Chester*. It was soon subdued by *Robert de Nothelent*, commander in chief under *Hugh Lupus*, who carried his arms far into *Wales*, and secured his conquests in the marches by building

or rather by adding new works to the castle of *Rudland*, which he had wrested from one of the Welsh princes.

At the time of the Conquest, all this tract of *Flintshire*, which was called by the *Saxons* Englefield, and afterwards by the *Normans* Articrofs, was in possession of *Edwin*, the last earl of *Mercia*; and on his defeat and forfeiture, bestowed, with the earldom of *Chester*, on *Hugh Lupus*.

It is observable that there were only seven churches at that time in the whole hundred; parochial divisions had not yet taken place. A writer in the latter end of the sixteenth century, remarks, that the old historians make no mention of either parishes, parsons, vicars, incumbents, or curates. The people attended, in those days, either the

cathedral churches, or the conventual, which were served by the prelates or monks, and those often assisted by presbyters, clerks, and deacons. As piety gained strength, other churches, for the conveniency of the devout, were erected by the nobility and men of property, who were desirous of spiritual assistance within their precincts; and to this were owing the churches, which, at that period in question, were so sparingly scattered over the land.

The whole of *Flintshire* was subdued by the *Saxons* immediately after the taking of Chester by *Egbert*. It was an open country, destitute of inaccessible rocks and mountains, like the rest of *North Wales*; and consequently incapable of defence against so potent an enemy.

The town is laid out with much regularity, but the streets are far

from being completed. The removal of the greater and the lesser fessions, and its want of trade, will be further checks to its improvement. This town gave name to the county, which, with that of Caernarvon, Merioneth, and Anglesea, composed the four ancient North Welsh shires, formed by Edward the First, immediately after the conquest of the principality.

The town is formed on the principle of a Roman encampment, being rectangular, and surrounded with a vast ditch and two great ramparts, with four regular partæ, as usual with that military nation. The public buildings within this precinct are the church, the town-hall, and the jail, not one of which is any particular ornament to this little capital. The castle is a square building, with a large round tower at

three of the corners, and a fourth a little disjointed from the other, and much larger than the rest. This is called the double tower: it had been joined to the castle by a drawbridge, and is of great thickness.

The founder of this castle is uncertain. Camden attributes it to Henry the Second. On the restoration it was resumed by the crown, among its other rights, in which it still continues. The crown governs it by a constable, who is likewise mayor of Flint.

The impending rocks which overhang the path in some parts of the lower road to Chester from hence, give a solemnity and beauty to the ride. The road is beside the river, which is a charming object, while the surrounding scenery cannot fail to detain the eye. Though the river does not from this point

measure more than five miles over, and in some parts nearly passable at low water, yet when the tide is full, and a brisk wind accompanies it, you behold the waves lifted from their capacious beds, and even assume the bold sallies of the ocean itself. The ships that are navigated through its element are from three to four hundred tons burden, and when wafted along by the gentle breeze, afford a lovely spectacle to the eye.

The ride from Flint to Chester on the Low Road (as it is termed) will much gratify the traveller. It is by far more calm and serene than the common post-road from Holywell to Chester, and frequently presents many pleasing objects that you are deprived of in that way.

About two miles from Flint you meet with some large fragments of

rocks, that occasionally obstruct the view; in other parts cultivation is even extended to the very banks of the river. A few miles from Park Gate, on the opposite side, you have a pleasing view of Worrall, well wooded, and highly cultivated, in the foreground of which stands the mansion of the late Sir J. Stanley, clothed with venerable woods, and delightfully situated. Sir John a few years before his decease made considerable improvements to his extensive demain; having banked in a part of the river, on which he has made a new plantation; consequently a new scene of objects present themselves in an agreeable manner. We here observed the humble cottages exhibiting the same neatness the other parts of our tour had presented; the gardens of which were sprinkled over with useful vegetables; the families all sun-burnt,

and apparently happy, emblems of industry and virtuous content.

At the distance of six miles from Flint you reach the higher ferry over the river Dee. On the right stands Saltney Marsh, noticed before, page 189. Here Henry II. encamped after his defeat at Ewloe; and Edward I. had also a camp here in his march to subdue Wales. Conjecture has made it a field of battle, and nothing is more probable but it might have partook of the horrors of war; for in forming the navigation of the Dee, when cutting through it, both helmets and spears were found, with other implements of war.

A short and very pleasing ride over the sands leads immediately to Chester.

TOUR
OF THE
RIVER WYE,
AND OTHER PARTS OF
SOUTH WALES.

Q 5

TOUR

W. T. H.

W. T. H.

T O U R

OF THE

W Y E.

THERE is not any part of our country that has a stronger claim to the attention of the traveller, or has been more universally admired, than the celebrated RIVER WYE. This beautiful meandering stream has often been the theme of poets, and the fruitful subject of tourists; some of whom have not hesitated to say, that for picturesque beauty and rich scenery it is not to be equalled in this or any other country.

A modern writer of taste has observed, " that while the eye of a
" traveller is employed in surveying
" the variety of scenes which nature
" exhibits, his attention should
" be engaged in marking with accuracy
" the manners of the inhabitants,
" through the countries which he passes;
" that, by selecting whatever is found
" excellent among them, he may learn to
" model his own conduct; by
" which, profit and delight will go
" hand in hand: and by repeated
" change of scene, he will daily
" lay up fresh treasure in his own
" mind, to meliorate and improve
" it."

It is a circumstance singular in its nature, that within a very small distance from the well-head of the Wye, the Severn has its origin. The two springs are not unlike:

but the fortune of rivers, like those of individuals, owes much to the various circumstances of situation and place. The Severn, opposed by a tract of ground that rises to the right, soon leaves Plinlimmon, and pursuing its course north-east, continues nearly in that direction until it reaches Shrewsbury. Here it meets another obstruction, which turns it south-east; afterwards, having less impediments, it enlarges its circle from place to place, receiving many large and bountiful supplies of water in its course; until at length its eddying waves embrace their kindred element by entering the ocean as an arm of the sea.

From the top of the mountain Plinlimmon, in Montgomeryshire, the Wye takes its rise: the water falls in a narrow stream, some hun-

dred yards, almost perpendicular, and pursues its capricious course through Radnorshire, Brecknockshire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, and Gloucestershire, embracing, in its course, a number of tributary streams until it empties itself into the Severn, below Chepstow.

The length has been generally computed eighty miles; and for its various picturesque scenery, it is no doubt indebted to the elevated banks of the river, and its peculiar winding course: circumstances, while they change the scene, are perpetually placing new objects of beauty before the eye.

It may likewise be observed, that though the Wye is composed of simple parts, still they are varied, and always new, chiefly owing to the road partaking of the irregularity of the

country, first climbing the hill, and then sinking into the valley, each change exhibiting a different character of things.

Another object of beauty is its *woods*. Wherever we may be led to traverse nature, in pursuit of pleasure, we never find a barren or solitary waste strike the mind with any peculiar effect, except the feeling it excites for the wretchedness it deplores.—How different a well-cultivated land! broken into hill and valley—take a *novice* in the study of nature into this scene, and you immediately discover its effects. By way of observation, it may not be improper to notice how, on a first view from Richmond Hill, the foot of a stranger is rivetted to the spot for many minutes. The cause is evident; the beautiful meander-

ing of the river Thames, the well-wooded bottom, and the chain of hills to the west, are objects of too much importance not to excite the feelings and interest the mind, by so grand an assemblage of beauty.

The *rocks* are the next point from which the Wye receives additional beauty; these, perpetually starting through the woods, produce a grand effect. The eye is pleased with the rich foliage of a tree, and views the eddying stream with gratefulness; while the naked and broken rocks never fail to produce those sensations which are inseparable from a survey of the *ruined majesty of nature*. In one spot you behold them with a few shrubs trembling before the blast of heaven; in another hanging their impending forms, and striking terror in the mind of the observer.

The general ornaments of the Wye, therefore, may be classed under four heads—the *grounds*, *rocks*, *wood*, and *buildings*. In whatever point of view these four attracting objects may be taken, they will yield a rich harvest to the eye of the traveller.

For a few miles from Plinlimmon the country does not put on any new appearance: a chain of hills forms what may be called the distance, varying and irregular. The river, not broad, rolls gently over its rocky bed, until at Cumerger, a distance of six miles, it receives a large supply of water from the river Castal. On the road which leads to the *Devil's Bridge*, you have the Castal in full view, which forms a very pleasing object. At Cumerger there is a wooden bridge thrown across this river, the fine

scenery around which will have sufficient charms to detain the traveller, if he has taste or sensibility to relish the beauties of nature. From hence, a good road leading to Llanidlos, runs in a line with the river, and affords a pleasant ride until you reach the village of Llangurig, whose clay built cottages proclaim the wretchedness of its inhabitants. A little below the town, the river Darnel has its source, it is said, from the hills of that name, and pursues its course into the Wye.

If any thing can compensate for the poverty of Llangurig, it is the extreme beauty and romantic appearance of nature that surrounds it; together with the hills that are enriched with the stately oak and branching underwood, forming an inimitable picture for the pencil of the artist.

Continuing our journey we came to the little town of Rhayader, whose whitewashed cottages had a pleasing effect. We could not altogether applaud the mode of whitewashing houses, which is a general custom in Wales, on account of the effect it has upon strangers not accustomed to look on such objects.

In the neighbourhood of Rhayader there are many charming scenes. The bridge, forming the segment of a circle, consists of one arch; the structure is plain, and, from its elevation, has a romantic appearance, having the immense rocks on each side for its bases.— This place formerly boasted of a castle, but no remains are now to be found. Camden informs us, it was put in repair in the reign of Richard the First.

The attention and civility we received from the host at the *sign of the Red Lion*, we cannot but remember with satisfaction.

Though not immediately connected with the subject of this river, we could not resist the impulse we felt to take a view of the *Devil's Bridge*, of which we had heard such multiplied and extraordinary accounts in our journey: of course, we departed the next day to inspect this stupendous scene. The distance from our comfortable little inn was 18 miles. During our ride, the eye was frequently arrested by the romantic beauties of this part of South Wales. For a few miles, the road is one continued ascent, perpetually giving new beauty to the landscape. The small town of Rhayader, and Vaga's

stream winding through the fertile vale below, have a charming effect. Flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, the wandering companions of the mountain, here browse in numbers, with the lonely shepherd beside them. The feelings of the mind, in contemplating these pictures of rational and animal life, move us by different sensations; we feel the exclusion of the former from social life, while the latter creates our concern for their perilous situation, as one false step would make instant death certain.

Pursuing the road on this side the old lead-mines, it becomes frightfully barren; but here you meet with a few cottages, erected for the workmen, that chase the gloom away.

The method of procuring the ore as found in its native element, will,

no doubt, be gratifying to one not accustomed to such sights.

The engine and other apparatus used in the process, are characterised by considerable antiquity, and bear marks of having been constructed before mechanics arrived at the perfection the now have.

The shaft will no doubt give some surprise, through which the miners informed us they had perforated the mountain, and have made a subterraneous passage almost through the same.

At a small distance from hence, the woods of Hafod burst at once on the eye. To the right, the road leads to Aberystwith.

We stopped to take a little refreshment at Pentre, a small inn about three miles distant from the bridge.

Continuing the road from Cwm-yfwith, a chain of mountains, of great extent, but remarkably irregular, present themselves : which appear as though driven by an immense storm, gradually rising above each other, with increasing grandeur, till they appear to touch the clouds.

We took up our abode at the Hafod Arms, a neat comfortable inn, which, stands in front of the Rhyddol. Fancy may here busy herself with what nature presents to the eye, in a pleasing manner.—The famous bridge is but a very short space from the inn ; but being embosomed in a thicket, it is probable many a stranger has passed over it, insensible of what the curious have sought after with so much avidity. The bridge consists of two arches, thrown over each other : one has great marks of antiquity ; and, from that circumstance, we

were informed the common people attribute it to the *devil's* invention. The chasm it covers is about 25 feet wide; and from the ancient records it is supposed was built about the year 1075. In the reign of Richard I, during the time of the pious crusades of our ancestors, tradition informs us, that Baldwin, the Bishop of Cambray, passed over it in 1188. The present fabric, built over the ancient one, was completed in 1753. The breadth of the old bridge was about 25 feet, the latter near 30. The chasm that yawns under these arches is so much covered with wood, that the eye can have but a partial view of the abyss below; in order therefore to obtain a better one of the vast torrent that rushes through it, we crossed the bridge to the right, and soon came to the base of the rocks on the

east side of the arch. Here, indeed, imagination may pause, and fill up all that language cannot describe. The stupendous height which the bridge bestrides, of more than 100 feet above the observer, the gloomy wood which gives a deep solitude to the scene—the troubled torrent at his feet, struggling through opposing rocks, with a tremendous roar, fill the mind with mingled sensations of fear and delight.

Having for some time gratified the eye with this surprising scene, we pursued a winding path that leads to the sublime cataracts west of the bridge. The Mynach here, from its unconfined course through broken rocks, bursts upon the eye with wildness and agitation. The first is a fall of more than 20 feet, whence it rushes with equal force, to a second leap of 60 feet: a third is attempted, but decreases about 20 feet; and here it falls

R

amongst the ragged rocks, which continually acting as a barrier to its repose, give it a tenfold rage: and rushing, with immense velocity, over projecting stones, tumbles with a headlong descent of 100 feet and upwards—after which it pursues its course through a small channel, and mixes with the waters of the Rhyddol. We could long have contemplated this scene as worthy of our detention, had not a gathering storm called to our recollection the comforts of our little inn.

The Rhyddol here is encircled with vast hills, some of which are prettily clothed with wood, others frightfully naked and barren.

From the brink of the river (though not easy of access) you are well repaid by a scene enchanting as beautiful.

Being now in the neighbourhood of the sylvan *Hafod*, we were

anxious to change the awful and sublime for the less terrific, and repose ourselves on fairy ground—for, taking it in all points of view, the charming residence of T. Johnes, Esq. certainly may be styled the *Paradise of Wales*; and, fearing to do it all the justice it deserves we forbear intruding our own sentiments, but will take the liberty of offering a description from the elegant pen of Mr. Cumberland.—It may be necessary to acquaint the reader, that by the liberal politeness of T. Johnes, Esq. tickets are left at the Hafod Arms and Devil's Bridge, for gaining admission to his elegant mansion, grounds, &c. and which never fail of securing an easy access.

“ That which renders the residence of Hafod the most remarkable is, that, with all its natural

“ beauties, it is close in the vicinity
“ of mountainous forests, of a cha-
“ racter totally different from its
“ own; of a character, I may add,
“ totally unlike any thing I ever
“ before beheld, and which many
“ people think superior to any place
“ in Wales.

“ One excursion to this place will
“ nor suffice common observers, nor
“ indeed many to the lovers of the
“ grand sports of nature; and, al-
“ though the intended paths are not
“ as yet sketched out, I shall re-
“ commend to those, who can bear
“ the fatigue of climbing among
“ dingles—who, in search of beau-
“ ties, are capable of descending
“ from the ‘ hilly crofts, that brow
“ the bottomed glades, down to the
“ dark sequestered rocks below—
“ to enter upon the Fynach stream,
“ about four miles from Hafod, and

“ skirt it, as well as they can, down
“ to the Devil's Bridge.

“ I can fairly promise them they
“ will often find themselves in
“ ‘ umbrageous grots and caves of
“ cool recess, over which the ivy
“ creeps;’ behold the murmuring
“ water-falls down the sloped ‘ dell
“ dispersed,’ or ‘ in a glassy pool
“ unite their streams;’ see ‘ crisped
“ brooks, with mazy error, under
“ pendant shade, offering their glassy,
“ cool, translucent waves, ‘midst grots
“ and caverns, shagged with horrid
“ shade’.”

The different walks through the woods extend six or seven miles, and exhibit a variety of picturesque scenery which alternately charm and surprise.

“ Hafod is a place in itself so pre-
“ eminently beautiful, that it highly
“ merits a particular description.

“ It stands furrounded with so many
“ noble scenes, diversified with ele-
“ gance as well as with grandeur ;
“ the country, on the approach to it,
“ is so very wild and uncommon,
“ and the place itself is now so em-
“ bellished by art, that it will be
“ difficult, I believe, to point out a
“ spot that can be put in competi-
“ tion with it, considered either as
“ the object of the painter’s eye,
“ the poet’s mind, or as a desirable
“ residence for those who, admirers
“ of the beautiful wildness of nature,
“ love also to inhale the pure air of
“ aspiring mountains.

“ To all these charms, it has a
“ capacious stone mansion, executed
“ in the pleasing, because appropri-
“ ate, style of Gothic architecture,
“ situate on the side of a chosen,
“ sheltered dingle, embowered with
“ trees, which rise from a lawn of

" the gentlest declivity, that shelves
" in graceful hollows to the stream
" below.

" From the portico, it commands
" a woody, narrow, winding vale;
" the undulating forms of whose
" ascending shaggy sides, are richly
" clothed with various foliage, broken
" with silvery water-falls, and crown-
" ed with climbing sheep-walks
" reaching to the clouds.

" Within the building, whose de-
" corations, though rich, are pure
" and simple, we find a mass of rare
" and valuable literature, whose pages
" here seem doubly precious, where
" meditation finds scope to range un-
" molested.

" In a word, so many are the de-
" lights afforded by the scenery of
" this place and its vicinity, to a
" mind imbued with any taste, that
" the impression on mine was in-

“ creased after an interval of ten
“ years from the first visit, employ-
“ ed chiefly in travelling among the
“ Alps, the Apennines, the Sabine
“ Hills, and the Tyrollese; along
“ the shores of the Adriatic, over
“ the Glaciers of Switzerland, and
“ up the Rhine; where though
“ in search of beauty, I never
“ saw any thing so fine—never so
“ many pictures concentrated in one
“ spot.

“ Wales, and its borders, both
“ north and south, abound, at inter-
“ vals, with fine things: Piercefield
“ has grounds of great magnificence,
“ and wonderfully picturesque beau-
“ ty. Downton Castle has a deli-
“ cious woody vale, most tastefully
“ managed: Llangollen is bril-
“ liant—the banks of the Conway
“ savagely grand—Barmouth ro-
“ mantically rural. The great Pis-

" till Rhayader is horribly wild—
 " Rhayader Wennol gay, and glo-
 " riously irregular; each of which
 " merits a studied description.

" But at Hafod, and its neigh-
 " bourhood, I find the effects of
 " all in one circle. I see the ' sweet-
 " est interchange of hill and valley,
 " rivers, woods, and plains, and
 " falls, with forests crowned, rocks,
 " dens, and caves;' infomuch, that
 " it requires little enthusiasm there
 " to feel forcibly with Milton, that

" All things that be, send up from earth's great

" altar

" Silent praise!"

The tasteful and liberal proprietor
 of this beautiful spot has, with the
 avail of modern improvements, con-
 trived a communication from his
 library to his conservatory, which
 has an effect to the eye the most se-
 rene and soothing that can be view-

ed. The library, a grand and capacious room, fitted up with every thing that is elegant and useful, strikes you, on your entrance, with sensations of the happiness it is capable of imparting within itself. At the further end is the large glass door, opening into the conservatory, wherein is collected a variety of rare and beautiful plants, with a fountain playing in the centre.

Botanists here would find an ample field for the gratification of the mind; as well as the studious, for all that literature is capable of imparting.

To those who are desirous of paying a visit to the ruins of Strata Florida Abbey, it stands about ten miles from Hafod, screened by friendly woods and lofty mountains, with the river Tivy winding beneath.

Having highly gratified ourselves with what Mr. Cumberland has described, by varying the road back, and leaving Hafod to the left, we soon came to our little inn at Pentré, from whence we pursued our old route back to Rhayader.

The imagination can form but a faint idea of the horrors of a thunder-storm in these wild and romantic places. In the course of our journey we were witness to two or three. The thunder rolled with an awful rumbling over the head, while the vales and the mountains gave back the tremendous sounds with double force. The cracks and bursts it made were distinguished from any we had before heard in our own neighbourhood. We had the curiosity to mark its progress, after the first flash of lightning, to its cessation, which, before the atmo-

sphere became calm and tranquil, rather exceeded one minute and thirty-one seconds.

The river here displays much impetuosity, foaming over its adamantine bed, and forming a cascade of several feet, almost immediately under the bridge: the foot-path winds its margin through the meadows, leaving the turnpike road to the right.

Kingston, in this neighbourhood, deserves particular attention from the traveller. The memorable remnants of antiquity to be seen in its district naturally call back those days in which *Caractacus* flourished, whose camp is still in high preservation on the hills towards Chum. Cæsar's may also be traced on an eminence beside the valley. Here too the immense dyke of Offa, king of the Mercians in the eighth

century, passes by Kingston, taking a slant direction, from the river Dee, across the kingdom, to Weymouth.

Brampton Bryan, the ancient seat of the Oxford family, stands in this valley. Its charming woods, that once afforded shade and shelter, are now no more: the husbandman having laid his axe to the root, it presents a naked and comfortless waste to the eye.

At the distance of a few miles from hence, both the river Eland and brook Clanven give another supply of water to our river.— From hence we journeyed on towards Bualt. A little before we reached the town, the scenery was peculiarly inviting, on which account it did not fail to detain us.

Bualt is a small town, surrounded with a pleasant plain: it had form-

erly a castle, of which there are now no remains.

It was in this neighbourhood that the last reigning Prince of Wales, *Llewellyn*, was slain in a wood after a desperate battle between the Welsh and English forces.

Bualt has to boast of some bustle, though it puts on no parade of self-importance. A market-day here may be deemed London in miniature, from the hurry of its busy people.

The just and laudable zeal of industry has that in its nature, from the benefit it diffuses over a state, as to merit the applause of every observer. As such, it was our united wish that the busy multitude of Bualt and its neighbourhood might reap the personal benefit of their several labours.

About the distance of a mile from Bualt the river Irvon winds its course, and embraces the Wye. The Irvon, compared with other neighbouring rivers, is broad ; it has its origin from the hills in the county of Brecknock.

A new stone bridge is now erecting over it, near to the old one. It has six elliptical arches ; and upon the whole, produces a grand effect. On a hill, near adjoining to this place, is the residence of D. Thomas, Esq. The house is a handsome stone building, and commands a noble prospect towards the south, as well as the meandering course of the Wye and Irvon. It was here we contemplated the solitary life of the shepherd.

The fanciful descriptions and profuse eulogies which the poets have bestowed on the ancient pas-

toral life, might incline us very highly to estimate a state that is represented as replete with blessings, almost unallayed with afflictions, and as comprising the happiest of mankind; but how unlike is the picture of the unenlightened shepherds of our own times and country! Secluded from the world, bred up in ignorance, and without a resource to fill up the many vacant hours, how tediously must they pass away: and how undesirable seems the lot of this portion of mankind, doomed from the days of their youth to the sole employment of tending flocks, and fated to traverse, during life, bleak and dreary mountains, rarely trodden by the foot of man, and where the solitary shepherd is seldom greeted by a human voice!

The road from Bualt to the Hay is down a beautiful valley, which partaking of the advantage of a high bank, every beauty of the enchanting district presented itself to the eye. The river rolls on with majesty and grandeur, and often disports itself in broad curves, washing with white foam the verdant banks that bloom beside it.

Not far distant from hence, we had a view of Llangoed.— Surrounded with its majesty of woods, it is a very extensive domain, and worthy the residence of any person; but why it should be deserted by its former master, we know not. However, certain it is, it has passed into the hands of a stranger.

The small village of Clyro it may be necessary to notice, not from any peculiar beauty it possesses, but for

the highly interesting view you have of the Wye from a small temple in the upper part of the garden of the parsonage-house. In the forest of Clyro, from a small hill, the point of prospect, which is marked by a single tree, commands a wonderful assemblage of beauty.

Continuing our route, we had a view of the elegant seat of Mr. Edwards, and soon reached the small village of Swains. The mountains here gradually recede, and the face of the country assumes a new character. Glasbury bridge, built by the late Mr Edwards, we admired: it consists of several arches, and has an agreeable light appearance. Mr. Edwards was the celebrated architect of Pont-y-Pridd, an account of which will be found in page 157.

About four miles from the Hay stands Maeslow, the ancient residence of the Howarths. The situation has been deemed not inferior to any in Wales.

The Hay is happily situated on a hill. It was formerly a Roman station, and was considered as a place of great strength, being defended by a strong castle, until Owen Glendowr laid it in ashes.

At Machinelth he exercised the first acts of his royalty, when he accepted the crown of Wales A. D. 1402. At this place he assembled a parliament. The house is shown to this day, divided in small tenements, and is well worth a visit from the curious,

The present castle is near the centre of the town. The creeping ivy, the general companion of fallen ruins, fastens around its remains,

producing a striking effect on viewing this venerable ruin.

The ancient castle is converted into a dwelling-house, belonging to the Wellington family.

The church stands on the side of the river, but has nothing particular to recommend it. At a small distance from the bridge, you have a scene peculiarly enriched by meadows, corn-fields, and stately woods. The black mountains give an excellent back ground to the scenery, and when illuminated by the sun, cannot fail of giving force to every object and feeling to every nerve.

The Wye, on quitting this place, receives a great body of Water from the Dulas river, after which it assumes a bolder confidence and more rapid current.

About the distance of seven miles from the Hay, on the road to Aber-

gavenny, stand the ruins of Lantony Priory: Dugdale informs us, in his *Monasticon*, that it was a place richly adorned with wood.—How great would be the contrast, could the searching eye of our celebrated historian view it now!—Its tall woods are no more, and the ruin is wholly naked and desolate.

The following account of this once celebrated place is given by Giraldus.

“ In the deep vale of Ewyas
“ stands encircled with an amphi-
“ theatre of immense mountains,
“ the church of St. John: it is co-
“ vered with lead, and not inele-
“ gantly built, with an arched roof
“ of stone. This spot is justly
“ suited for religious exercises, and
“ the most proper for canonical
“ discipline of any other monastery in
“ the British island.

“ The church was first founded,
“ solitary and remote from all
“ worldly noise, by two hermits,
“ to the honour of a monastic life,
“ and is situated on the river Hod-
“ ney, which runs through the
“ length of the vale.

“ The cloistered monks may
“ view, from within their walls,
“ the mountains rising above them,
“ and almost touching heaven with
“ their exalted summits, and a-
“ bounding with deer feeding aloft,
“ at the extremity of the lofty ho-
“ rizon.

“ The sun is never visible to this
“ gloomy recess, till between the
“ afternoon hours of one and three;
“ and even then is rarely seen, ex-
“ cept in the clearest season.”

The foregoing picture from Gi-
raldus is masterly drawn; and

though touched with a poetical pencil, is very accurate. The church is really encircled with mountains, for the opening through them to the vale is not visible from the cloister.

The lower parts of the mountains, and the valley itself, are enriched with meadows and corn-fields, and are row and then enlivened with a little wood.

The abbey church was built in the form of a cross, and is still a noble object; it was founded, according to Speed, in the year 1137, and is a regular composition of Norman architecture, mixed with Gothic. It may be called regular because all the under structure is Gothic, and the upper Norman, the arches below being all pointed, and those above circular; and because it was built upon one entire plan, and manifestly at one and the same time.

The whole nave, the roof excepted, remains from east to west, and was found to be by measurement, two hundred and twelve feet in length, and twenty-seven feet four inches in breadth; the aisles are no more than eight feet eight inches broad. The stone diagonal vault, over the body of the church, sprang from small clustered flying pillars; these are still seen projecting from the walls, between the Gothic arches of the nave.

Two sides of the high tower are still extant, which rise from nearly the centre of the church.

The whole structure is faced with a durable and well-worked stone, and the ruins offer as romantic a view as any in the tour.

Just above the little parish of Llandewy, four miles from Llantony, is a remarkable mountain,

the sides of which have, at different times, been broken from it, and now lie in immense fragments underneath, having left a long perpendicular precipice more than 100 feet high.

We could learn no particulars about these separations of the rock, though, from the apparent freshness of some of the fallen pieces, we did not conceive the last to be very ancient.

Several stupendous fissures and chasms appear on and about the mountain of Skirid vawr, the foot of which we passed in our morning's ride. These were occasioned by the same cause as the separation of the rock near Llandewi, which in all probability proceeded from its foundation being weakened or destroyed by the frequent burstings of the springs below; when the sinking or division

of the part of the rock would naturally follow from its great impending weight.

Whatever truth may be in our conjecture, the inhabitants of Abergavenny attribute the rents of Skirrid vawr to a different cause, and endeavoured to convince us that they were the miraculous effects of the convulsions of nature on the day of the crucifixion.

At a distance of little more than two miles from the Hay is Clifford Castle. Camden records it to have been built by Fitzosborn, Earl of Hereford, from whom descended the Earls of Cumberland. Tradition informs us, that at this place the celebrated Rosamond spent the early part of her life. The castle is an object worthy the notice of the tourist, if it be only to sketch its lesser attractions in the fallen ruins. Passing

through several villages, we soon obtained a charming prospect of the Merebich hills, whose noble swells rise full in front, continuing for some time before the eye as a considerable object.

Whitney we remarked as a pleasant village. Its time-worn bridge now only exhibits a mass of ruins.

Bradwardine is situated on the bank of the river ; the ruins of the castle stand in full view, but little remains to attract notice, except the scenery around the place, which has much to interest the eye.

About eight miles from Hereford, and very little out of the road, stands Foxley : the charming wood that surrounds it, as well as its grounds, are greatly worthy of attention.

A pleasing ride of about two miles, through a wood of fine young oaks, leads to the point of a hill called *Lady*

Lift, where the view cannot fail to strike with admiration and delight: it commands a north-east prospect of Herefordshire, the Clee hills in Shropshire, the Malvern hills in Worcester-shire, and Brecon and Radnorshire mountains. The direct road to Kingston is under this hill.

Passing from hence to Hereford, a number of charming villas present themselves: among these we particularly distinguished Belmont, the views from which in every direction, must irresistibly attract notice. Nature and art having happily combined, here make a free-will offering to the stranger of their loveliness and charms.

As several histories of Hereford are extant, it is foreign to our intention to investigate its antiquities: nevertheless, as it has been our custom hitherto to observe particular

objects, we wish to notice those that appear to us worthy of the attention of the stranger. This ancient city, we are informed by the eminent historian Camden, was founded in 1079, in the reign of Henry I. The present venerable church has undergone many changes, and at different periods has been much beautified by its several bishops. The columns are massive and ponderous, and exhibit all the grandeur of ancient architecture. There are likewise some monuments of its bishops still remaining, and others not unworthy of notice, which stand as beacons to the passing stranger, to point out his mortality. From the accident which happened in 1794, when the west tower of the church, with part of the body, unfortunately fell down, the cathedral has undergone a tho-

rough repair, at the expense of upwards of 10.000*l*.

The vicars' college stands at a little distance from the cathedral, and commands a fine view of the Wye, as well as its fertile vales and meandering stream.

The castle has been a capital fortress. Leland, in his Itinerary, says, "It was one of the fairest, largest, and "grandest in England." The place on which it stood is now called Castle Green, from which is a good view of the surrounding country.

The bridge consisting of eight arches, is of stone, and carries with it proofs of great antiquity. Some historians have supposed it to be erected soon after the conquest.

The Wye here winds its placid stream round a point of land for two miles, until it is almost brought to touch the town. The face of the

country is in a high state of cultivation; and the cattle which graze in its meadows are objects that add beauty to the scene. We passed the picturesque village of Mordiford, and soon came in view of Holme Lacy, a mansion belonging to the Duke of Norfolk. The building, compared with many in this country, has nothing to captivate, except possessing a fine collection of family portraits.

.King's Caple, a small village, is very pleasantly situated amidst a charming assemblage of woods, a little below which is Harewood, the ancient residence of — Hoskins, Esq.

We continued our rout to Selleck, which afforded us a capital view of Ross, on the approach to which the venerable trees called Ash-wood, successfully clothe the banks of the Wye.

Ros stands high, and commands many delightful views: the churchyard has always been the most admired; it consists of a partial but rich prospect of the Wye, and of a vast extent of country beyond it, which, being broken into many parts, is marked by no characteristic objects. The pleasure-boats that are constantly employed between here and Chepstow give life and beauty to the town.

Ros once boasted of a castle, which is reported to have been demolished in the civil wars.

To pass over the benevolent Man of Ros, John Kyrle, would be to slight those virtues which any part of our countrymen might be proud to possess. This town owes much of its improvements to his benevolent exertions. The admirable poet who sung so well in his praise has inform-

ed us he possessed but 500*l.* a year, and yet he appears to have enjoyed every happiness himself, as well as to have diffused it to others. He was sheriff for the county 1683, and died 1724. It is singular to remark, that there was no monument raised to the memory of this exemplary character until 1776, a period of fifty-two years.

From Ross, the banks of the Wye are low, and the river here becomes tame. Crossing the bridge, we reached Wilton Castle, which appears on the margin, shrouded with a few trees. The castle formerly covered a vast extent of ground, now in part converted into a garden.

Camden says, that King John gave Wilton, with the castle, to H. Longchamp, from whom it descended to Lord Grey de Wilton.

At the distance of a mile from Wilton, it may be worth the travel-

ler's attention to ascend the hill leading to Monmouth, called Pencreek, where nature has been profuse of her gifts; the views of which cannot fail to charm, and may be considered as the most sublime the river affords. Descending from this eminence, little attracted our attention except the doubling of the several capes, and the woody banks rising one beyond another, appearing and vanishing by turns, until we came to Goodrich Castle, which is considered the second grand object of the river, and is truly picturesque. It has been said, that "nature is always great in design:" in this place, she may be said to colour from the harmony of the whole. We ascended the hill, to contemplate the scene, and survey the ravages of time. The creeping ivy, as though it were the sorrowing com-

panion of decayed fabrics, had here entwined itself round the embattled tower. History appears silent with regard to the period when this castle was built; but we learn, so early as the reign of King John, that the Earl of Pembroke had a grant of it from that monarch. It has four large round towers; the windows are arched in the Saxon style. Here was once a drawbridge, resembling that of Beeston Castle, in Cheshire, intended, no doubt, as a place of safety for its guard.

As the Wye here makes one of its boldest sweeps, you are carried almost round the castle, which you survey in a variety of forms, and contemplate both its own dignity and the dignity of its situation.

A little below the castle is Goodrich Priory: a few Gothic windows are still remaining, to mark the spot

of penitence and prayer. History records it to have been endowed by Edward the Fourth, A. D. 1481.

From the village of Goodrich we had an extensive view of the forest of Dean, also of Rure Dean church, which is an object of grandeur.

Pursuing our course down the river, the seat of — Vaughan, Esq. of Courtfield, attracted our attention, and appeared a lively object in the road. For some distance both sides of the river continue steep and beautiful. Nature here may be said to characterize her own scenes, and cherish her own beauties, as we cannot but admire how she adorns both concave and convex forms.

From hence we soon approached Ladbroke Wharf, where a considerable commerce of coal is carried

on to Hereford, Ross, and its neighbourhood. Here appeared life and bustle. The small vessels which lie against the wharf are ready to receive their burden; all hands are busy, and every mind occupied with its own portion of labour. Behind the wharf hangs a rich wood, forming a back ground to the whole. By a quick bend of the river, your eye immediately meets the picturesque town of Welsh Bickner, which, with its plantations and stately woods, forms a noble and majestic scene. We next approached Cold Well: the front appears as a woody hill, occasionally varying as the objects rise or recede before the eye.

Here we left the barge to its navigators, and climbed the majestic rocks, to enjoy the scenery; and though the task was arduous, it well

repaid us for the toil. In passing these rocks to the New Weir, a more sublime scenery cannot be conceived; wild thyme and various mountain productions scent the gale, and yield a rich fragrance to the smell: it is also to be noticed that this pass is little more than one mile to the New Weir, though by water it is three. The river here is wider than usual, and takes a sweep round a prodigious rock.

On the opposite side of the river are the vast iron forges which are well worth visiting: the hammers that beat and shape the fiery mass, though the sound may be grating to the ear of sensibility, still be it remembered how useful are its purposes, and how valuable is every part of *manual labour* that tends to produce the comforts and conveniences of life.

Mr. Tanner's iron works at Monmouth are particularly deserving of notice ; and, from the very obliging disposition of the owner, much information may be obtained.

The ore, we were informed, was principally supplied from Lancashire, and smelted by the aid of great bellows, worked by water. The genuine metal is separated from the dross by the vast heat of the furnace. Different forges are variously and curiously constructed for the purpose of forming the metal to every size, from the ponderous pig to the thin wove extended wire.

Whitechurch stands in the centre of a vale, the hills beyond which being in part covered with detached stones, from the upper part of the rocks, give a singular effect to the scene : one pointed fragment in particular rising

above its kindred rocks, produces a fantastic appearance; the eye being directed solely to the view of those wild pictures of nature, cannot but call forth all the emotions of terror and delight.

A great master in landscape might here say to himself.—“Soul, take
“thy fill. Here is nothing, how-
“ever small or great, that thou mayst
“not feast on the rapture: why
“then roam into distant countries,
“in pursuit of what cannot give
“thee more substantial pleasure or
“delight? Here thou beholdest the
“works of thy Creator, disfigured
“by no ingenuity, nor tortured by
“pampered taste: nature, pure na-
“ture, shines in all her works, blend-
“ing, in the happiest manner, the
“gay with the grand, and the simple
“with the sublime!”

The river here makes a sudden fall, but of no considerable height, still sufficient to challenge the name of a cascade: the water, through the whole course we had gone, kept a solemn and steady pace, while the objects around moved as it were in unison with it: every rock which overshadowed the bright stream was tranquil and majestic; but here the rapidity of the water, with the more than usual noise it produced, impressed a new face on the scene: by us it appeared to be uproar and agitation, while every rock, passing the bounds we had before noticed, stared with terror and wildness.— The barges here require more than common toil to tow them up the river. A little below New Weir the scenery of the river was closed by the Doward hills. Camden has

said, that the bones of gigantic persons were found here interred. They who may be courageous enough to climb them, would, no doubt, be repaid by all that could captivate the eye in scenery.

Adjoining the wood, near the extremity of the hill, is a cavern called King Arthur's Hall.

A little before we reached Monmouth, we were struck with the pleasing situation of Hadnock House, which stands beside the forest of Dean. From hence we were gratified with a view of Monmouth, which we soon approached. The castle, which was formerly the palace of a king, and the birth-place of a great prince, Henry the Fifth, has now few attractions to detain the traveller. When we contemplate the picture of time, how little is there to be proud of, when we

are told by a celebrated tourist, "that this said palace is now converted into a yard for *fatting ducks!*" History records, that in this castle, Edward the Second, after he had been made prisoner by his Queen Isabella, was for a time confined, A. D. 1326. We also further learn, that the celebrated historian Jeffery of Monmouth was born and educated here. It had a Benedictine monastery, or convent of Monks, founded 1240. Jeffery was made archdeacon of Monmouth 1251, and afterwards bishop of St. Asaph.

The gaol, compared with many, has great advantages, being built on a lofty, healthy spot: it casts a look of terror over the country, and we flattered ourselves that was its worst consequence. From this spot we had a good view of the town, and

the adjacent country. For more particulars of this place, See page 138.

As we departed from Monmouth, the banks of the river, on the left, were rather low; but we had not proceeded far when they became steep and woody, varying their shapes as usual. In the neighbourhood of St. Breival's Castle are some beautiful views, but the castle is at too great a distance to form a striking object from the river.

Opposite to Monmouth you have a view of the Kemmin rocks. The country here is particularly rich in soil, as well as other gifts of nature.

We could not resist paying a visit to see the noble remains of Ragland Castle, a distance of about six miles from Monmouth. On the road, we were greatly delighted with the

rich cultivation of the country.— Ragland seems to stand in a vale; but, as you approach it, assumes an elevated station. This noble ruin has two areas within the ditch, into each of which you enter by a lofty gateway: the first area contains the kitchen and offices; the grand hall, or banquetting room, forms the screen between the two; the music gallery may also be traced, which divides the hall from the parlour. On viewing the hall, &c. the mind is naturally filled with images of former magnificence and grandeur; the festivity of whose board is passed into forgetfulness, like the worthy inhabitants of this once devoted spot. How well has the poet observed——

Vain is the blaze of wealth, the pomp of power?
Lo, here attendant on the shadowy hour.

The citadel is a large octagonal tower, three sides of which are still remaining: the tower is encircled by a moat, and was formerly joined to the castle by a drawbridge.

Ragland might once, with great justice, be styled the *court* of the princes of this country; and that at a period not very remote. The youths of the distinguished families of Wales may be said to have received the last polish of manners within its walls. The splendour it exhibited was the just admiration and boast of its devoted countrymen, and might fairly challenge our best modern times. Whence or wherefore it is left desolate and forsaken by its noble owners, must be matter of mournful concern: as a continuance of its former dignity and hospitality would doubtless add much comfort and happi-

ness to a certain class of people, who are only left to contemplate the ruin which time displays, or reflect on the hours which, alas! cannot be called back.

See a more minute account of this place in page 131.

A little before you reach St. Breival's, the Wye receives a new supply from a little stream called Whitebrook.

St. Breival's castle history records to have been built by the Earl of Hereford, in the reign of Henry I. The Earl of Berkeley is the present constable and the Duke of Beaufort (by whom this ancient structure is kept in repair) the Lord of the Mannor.

Cultivation here, arrayed in her milder forms, cannot fail of giving pleasure to the eye and gratification to the mind.

At a small distance from Big Weir is the seat of General Rooke, well deserving attention: it commands a charming view of the river, and other interesting objects, which, from industry and commerce, is constantly presented to the eye; while, at the same time, it imparts this useful lesson—that only from multiplied scenes of active life springs the true source of our happiness.

From hence we departed, to visit the noble remains of Tintern Abbey, which to court the favourable impulse of meditation, is sequestered in a dale.

A banquet this, where men and angels meet,
Eat the same manna, mingle earth and heaven.
YOUNG.

It occupies a small eminence, screened on all sides by its own

friendly rocks and woods, through which the river winds its course: the hills closing on its entrance and its exit, not common to other places, leave no room for the inclement blasts to enter.—The abbey was founded 1131, by Walter de Clare. It is an elegant specimen of the chaste Gothic, constructed on one plan and in one style, exhibiting another instance of the discernment of our ancestors in their selection of residences favourable to tranquillity and comfort, as well as of their choice of a situation abounding in every beautiful variety of scenery. William the Conqueror had given to Osbert the great grandfather of Walter, the manors of Woleston and Fadenham, and all that he could obtain in conquest from the Welsh.

T

The site of Tintern Abbey was possibly the result of one of the ravages of Osbert.

Walter, the founder, died without issue, and was succeeded by his brother Gilbert Strongbowe, Earl of Pembroke, whose grandson, Robert Strongbowe, conquered Leinster in Ireland. This afterwards came, by marriage, to the family of the Earl of Norfolk and Suffolk, Hugh Bigod marrying Maud the eldest of the female heirs of Strongbowe.

At the time of the dissolution here were thirteen religious houses. Henry the Eighth granted the site of this to Henry Earl of Worcester, through whom it has descended to the present Beaufort family.

The rich west window of this monastery is one of the finest specimens and remains of Gothic archi-

ecture in the kingdom, and is still entire and perfect: it is perhaps rather too broad for its height; and, according to modern taste, may be deemed not quite in proportion. But the grand and sublime of former days was not under the controul of imaginary rules; and the loftiness of the roof, with the general contour of the building, might have created beauties and perfections of which the ravages of time have deprived us of the means of judging.

The exquisite execution which is still apparent in some of the fragments of the once sculptured roof and its other decorations, is calculated in several instances to excite the emulation of the first artists of the age we live in.

The woody mountains with which the abbey is encircled and overshadowed make it highly favourable for contemplation.

Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure—&c.
But first and chiefest with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation !

MILTON—*Il Penseroso.*

Perhaps a more pleasing retreat cannot well be conceived : here is every thing combined by nature, in a small compass, that can captivate the eye or lead devotion to the altar of its God.

Oh, virtue ! thou gem of heaven, if thou regard thy inward happiness and peace, flee not this sequestered vale for the bubble of the world, though its gaudy tints invite : remember it has nothing

like thy hopes, which can shelter it in
the hours of solitude and reflection.

There let *her* strike with momentary ray,
As tapers shine there little lives away ;
There let her practise from herself to steel,
And look the happiness she does not feel.

Be *thine* to meditate an humbler flight,
When morning fills the fields with rosy light ;
Be thine to blend, nor thine a vulgar aim,
Repose with dignity—with quiet, fame.

ROGERS.

No part of the ruins is seen from
the river, except the abbey church.
To see the whole structure to the
greatest advantage, you must take
your stand near the road. Time,
the great master architect, has
blunted the sharp edges of rule and
compass, and the nice distinction
of line and figure remain no more
to invite the stranger, save to con-
template its fallen ornaments ; the
worn-off traces of the chissel, and

the creeping ivy, lending a nest to the bat and the swallow.

Such is the appearance of Tintern Abbey—

A silent chronicle of happier hours !

For a further historical account, See page 146.

We soon, from hence, approached the rocks on which Persfield is situated, late the seat and gardens of Valentine Morris, Esq. We contrived to land here at high-water, as the ouzy beach makes it not only inconvenient but very unpleasant to wade through, when the tide is out. We climbed the ascent by a regular easy zig-zag, and with facility gained the summit.

When we had attained the top, we had a command (from the eminences of this situation, which surveys the Wye) of the grandest views

to be seen on the river—the intersection of rock and wood forming the segment of a circle which sweeps in its semi-circumference a base of two miles and upwards.

For the better effects of the views as well as the conveniency of landing, we were here at the period of the water flowing in and reaching the shores, as the river is strongly tinged with the various soils over which it washes; and at the ebb the rich verdure of the banks is fringed with slopes of mud, which greatly reduce the impressions the mind would otherwise acquire.

Nature had been highly bountiful to this spot before Mr. Morris began his attempts at her improvement; and he had little else to do than make approaches to her beauties by forming walks and opening views, through the woods, to the

variegated objects which surround them.

Invention may here ardently busy herself in forming fancied objects—now a citadel, now a promontory, now a bay, presenting itself to the eye, and which the imagination may almost change at pleasure for other substitutes. Rock upon rock appears to rise in series over each other; sometime, the woods between, and sometimes below them; and again, the woods rising above the rocks. Precipices, water-falls, and all the accumulation of grandest scenery arising one after the other, without confusion, without disorder—ever varied, and though a variety of the objects are often seen, ever new.

Can we possibly pass over these enchanting grounds, and not lament that their once elegant and tasteful

proprietor is now no longer its owner? Judgment and skill appear displayed in the highest degree, in all that Mr. Morris has done; the fastidious critic may carp, and suggest alterations; but the succeeding critic, carping and suggesting again, will tell him—*suum cuique tribuere*.

Along the brow of the precipice, you catch the most romantic views, the compass of scenery being the richest in which the imagination could wish to busy herself.

The walks are disposed through woods and shrubberies on these bold and lofty parts, whose course follows the winding passage of the river for several miles, in all its meanderings, giving views of such variety as dazzle with their fascination.

The vicissitude of prospects is more rapid at Persfield than can be conceived, without being seen; at

one point it is confined to a range of half a mile; advancing a few yards, you follow the Wye in all its serpentine windings, through a narrow but beautiful valley, to its junction with the vast waters of the Severn. Proceeding a little farther, the landscape again becomes bounded as before, yet surprisingly varied, and as delightfully attractive; alternately limited and extended, but so sweetly varying, you scarce trace an affinity of resemblance, and at the period you almost imagine yourself on fairy land.

At times we caught the opposite shore, lofty, bold, and ornamented with hanging woods, excluding the prospect of the country behind; at other times, the eye falls on a craggy naked cliff, less elevated, and giving admission to a wide range of view. At one spot the flatness of

the shore lets in the forest of Dean, the fresh verdure of whose meadows forms a beautiful contrast to the romantic scenery with which the eye has previously been feasted.

Approaching the end of the walks, from a perpendicular precipice, upwards of 300 feet high, is a scene that can be but faintly described; the soft tints of a beautifully variegated wood surprising you with a soothing tranquillity that makes you insensible of the eminence on which you are standing. Still gradually ascending, you come to a summit from whence all the objects which you have before severally examined burst at once on the sight; their collective beauty adding lustre to their separate charms, and giving to the sphere of vision an entertainment which it could not conceive itself capable of enjoying. The hills of So-

merfethshire, the Severn, Mount Denny Rock, in its middle, and the Bristol Channel, come within the group ; a combination which produces in this scene the most captivating effect.

Persfield has, in addition to these beauties, some most extraordinary echoes. My friend, producing a flute, raised some of the sweetest sounds which ever struck my ear. The splashing of the water from the neighbouring fall had, at one of the spots where the echo is heard, a most singular effect.

The position called the *Lover's Leap*, has rather a frightful precipice, rendered gloomy by its solitude of woods ; but it gives you a charming command of the upper curves of the Wye ; and from the superior heights of Wynd Cliff a

scene of modest dignity crowns the whole.

We passed on the opposite side of the Wye, to see Lancot.

The traveller will here meet with ample recompence, in viewing the exquisitely beautiful peninsula of Lancot, comprising a circumference of about two miles; in approaching which, he will mark the softened interruption to the grand and magnificent objects which are constantly presenting themselves to his eye, in his passage from Tintern—of the perpendicular and stupendous precipices, sometimes naked and sometimes clothed with the richest verdure,

Cedar and pine, and fir and branching palm,
A silvan scene! and as the ranks ascend,
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view.

MILTON.

The Wye almost encircles this scene, in one or other part of which the surrounding mountains reflect their gloomy shades. Here wandering about, the sweet and modest violet attracts your notice : it recalled to my recollection the pure and delicate passion of Lorenzo de Medici, and one of the elegant sonnets he addressed to the lady who afterwards became his wife. Mr. Roscoe, in his translation, has preserved all the character and chastity of the original :

Not from the verdant garden's cultur'd bound,
That breathes of Pæstum's aromatic gale,
We spring ; but nurslings of the lonely vale,
'Midst woods, obscure, and native glooms
were found ;
'Midst woods, and glooms, whose tangled
brakes around
Once Venus forrowing trac'd, as all forlorn
She sought Adonis, when a lurking thorn
Deep on her foot impress'd an impious wound.

Then prone to earth we bow'd our pallid flowers,
And caught the drops divine ; the purple dyes
Tinging the lustre of our native hue ;
Nor summer gales, nor art-conducted showers,
Have nurs'd our slender forms, but lovers' sighs
Have been our gales, and lovers' tears our dew.

The successive scenery from Monmouth to Lancot is peculiarly impressive. The jutting rock, and its dizzy height, the rich verdure of meadows, sloping from the hills to the water's edge, dotted with flocks of sheep hanging every where on its green steeps ; on the under-grounds herds of cattle browsing in silent melancholy, some laving in the water, others retiring to sheltered banks, to protect them from the worrying and tormenting fly : the tufted woods so closely set together, as to invite to meditation in looking on them : the rocks, here

and there starting in continual ornament, with the steepy paths through which the cattle trace their course—These are all objects which catch and detain involuntary attention, and rivet you almost to the spot.

With soft suspended sleep attention moves,
And silence hovers o'er the list'ning groves ;
Orb within orb the charmed audience throng,
And the green vault reverberates the song.

DARWIN.

Here the soft distance melting from the eye,
Dissolves its forms into the azure sky.

KNIGHT.

At a small distance from hence is
Chepstow.

Chepstow has much business of its own, and may be considered as the chief port of the Wye. Here a busy multitude thronged the wharf, some in pursuit of business; others of pleasure.

In this life, in order to obtain *happiness*, the mind must have occupation, be it pleasure, curiosity, or emolument. Ceasing to have employment, langour takes place of good-humour and sociability, and we often fall unhappy victims to our own perverseness.

The castle is situated on an elevated perpendicular rock, which gradually diminishes, till it sinks into the level of the Wye. The wooden bridge, with a stone pier in the centre (probably ever since Leland's time), produces, at low water, an effect rather terrific; which may be readily conceived from its necessary height, the tide oftentimes rising sixty feet, and flowing in with great rapidity.

When we recollected that the area or site of this once magnificent castle had occupied five acres of ground,

the mind naturally reverted to the baronial grandeur which with the times of chivalry prevailed within its walls; the circumstance of its period of erection being unknown, by no means suppressing such sensations. It was of considerable importance, so late as with the last efforts of Charles the First, when Thomas Morgan demanded its surrender to Sir Thomas Fairfax.

The Stinchcombe Quarter, 'as Morgan called it; or the menace of retaliation, appears to have forcibly operated on Fitzmorris, the governor. Prince Rupert had put the men of Stinchcombe to the sword. Fitzmorris, though he sent a gallant refusal, knew not how to make a gallant defence; for he surrendered in four days after, without any resistance deserving of notice.

Three years afterwards, Sir Nicholas Kemis, with a spirit worthy the cause he espoused, surprised the port in the night, and obtained its possession. Cromwell marched against it in person, hoping to take it by storm; but, unsuccessful in his attempt, he was compelled to leave it to the slow progress of a siege; when the garrison and Kemis, with 160 men, gallantly defended themselves till their provisions were exhausted. Kemis and forty of his men were killed in the siege. This was the last place which held out against the Parliament forces. In this castle, Henry Martin, the regicide, died a prisoner.

Chepstow gives to the Duke of Beaufort one of his titles.

The division of the two counties of Monmouth and Gloucester is in the centre of Chepstow bridge.

After journeying amid a pleasing succession of beauties, that had often held attention captive, we took up our residence, for several days, at the agreeable town of Chepstow, near which the Wye mingles with the vast waters of the Severn, and becomes one kindred stream.

A farther account of Chepstow will be found in page 143.

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
MANNERS and CHARACTER
OF THE
W E L S H,
Etc.

THE paths of education that lead to refinement of manners are now become generally extended through every division of our island. Hence it appears, that from the introduction of English schools into the principality of Wales, the natives have gradually become more

and more courteous, and, in many instances, discover no inferiority as to mental endowments or cultivated manners with their neighbours the English.

As it hitherto has been the lot of a great portion of mankind to be deprived of such advantages, it may, in every state and nation, account for the very gradual progress in civilized manners, and the prejudices ever attendant on ignorance; it should therefore always be the practice of every one who may either travel for pleasure or useful inquiry, to make those allowances for the customs and manners of a people which in the nature of things is reasonably their due.

Where the mind has long been left destitute of culture, it will account for a belief so generally retained in

spells, omens, witches, ghosts, &c, throughout Wales; nor is similar credulity by any means uncommon in many parts of our own country, even at this day, as may abundantly be seen in Mr. Brandt's Popular Antiquities.

The singular sociability of the Welsh character is indisputable; their attachment to the *harp* is well known. and an unrivalled eagerness for the *dance*. The latter amusement we were informed prevails, even on the *sabbath*, after the service of the church is over.

A temper naturally hasty, a high national spirit, and a hardy temperament of frame, are striking traits in the character of cambrians.—From a single disagreement in a convivial party, we have known the whole room become one scene of confusion; each has challenged his fellow, and a

battle royal has ensued. But the Welsh do not cherish resentment. In a few minutes the dance has succeeded, and general harmony been restored.

Such are the sons of Cambria's ancient race,
A race that cheeked victorious Cæsar, aw'd
Imperial Rome, and forced mankind to own
Superior virtues Britons only knew,
Or only practis'd, for they nobly dar'd
To face oppression, and where freedom finds
Her aid invok'd, there will the goddess fly.

ROBT.

"Hospitality," says a late ingenious tourist, "that affection which
" may take root in every nation,
" but which retreats in general from
" the seats of opulence and luxury,
" is peculiarly adapted to the disposition of the Welsh; and where-
" ever an opportunity has occurred,
" I have often witnessed its fascinating influence. This ever-blooming
" flower frequently adorns those

“ rugged tracks which seem almost
“ impervious to the haunts of men;
“ in the most dreary wilds it charms
“ the weary senses of the traveller,
“ and it flourishes eminently in the
“ remotest vallies of Cambria.”

Wales, with regard to its natural wildness and romantic beauty, for fertile vales and towering mountains, may fairly vie with any other country; whilst her grateful rivers, ever varying as they flow, present a countless succession of beauties.—The meandering *Dee*, with *Conway* and the *Dovey*, in North Wales, are no inconsiderable rivals to the *Towey*, the *Wye*. and the *Usk*, in the south. The majestic beauties of the *Rhydol* and the *Tivy*, may challenge competition with the *Mawdoe* or the *Clydd*.

The heights of the mountains in the north have certainly the pre-eminence over the south. Snowdon and Cader Idris will ever stand as monuments of some great convulsions of nature, and remain a stupendous spectacle, to awe and surprise the traveller.

In the south, cultivation takes the lead of the north, as well as in population; though the difference in the number of the towns and villages is not very great. Those of North Wales have, within these few years, been greatly improved, from their free intercourse with Ireland; and the roads in every part are wonderfully improved.

Comparing the beauty of the vales together in the two districts, the superiority must be given to the north, so long as Clydd and Festiniog remain.

On the superior dignity of their castles and abbeys it is hard to decide. Ragland, Tintern, Llantony, and the fragments of Caerphilly, are all objects of proud distinction: nevertheless, when we behold the picturesque and soaring towers of Caernarvon, Haerlech, and Conway, with the sober but venerable Valle Crucis Abbey, our preference becomes suspended, and we scarcely know to which the palm should be assigned, or from which we have received the greatest portion of surprise and delight:—

While stray'd our eyes o'er Towy's flood,
Over mead, and over wood,
From hill to dale, from dale to hill,
And Contemplation had her fill.
Ever charming, ever new,
The varied landscape-charms the view,
The cataract's fall, the river's flow,
The woody vallies warm and low;
The windy summit, wild and high,
Roughly rushing on the sky;

The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tower,
The naked rock, the shady bower;
Each gives each a double charm,
Like pearls upon an Ethiop's arm.
Thus is Nature's vesture wrought,
To instruct our wand'ring thought;
Thus she dresses green and gay,
To disperse our cares away.

DYER.

CURIOUS PARTICULARS

RELATIVE TO

W A L E S.

PLINY, in his Natural History says, that a small time after the Romans had carried their arms through the island, they began to apply themselves to working the mines: at first the lead ore was got with ease, as it lay near the surface. In Pliny's time, who died A. D. 79, there was a law, limiting the annual produce, as even now, with regard to black lead. The extraordinary discoveries, that have been made at different periods appear,

from the testimony of ancient historians, to be founded more in chance or accident than any particular gift of genius.

Justin tells us, that the gold mines of *Galiccia* were discovered by the plough; and Strabo asserts, that those of *India* owed their discovery to pismires, who, by their common industry, raised the earth into a hillock. Trivial accidents have been the causes of vast mineral discoveries. The great mine at Halkin, belonging to Earl Grosvenor, was discovered by ditching: whilst that at Llangynnog first obtained notice by the step of a woman ascending a hill, and baring the vein with her feet.

The ancient method of mining, in many respects, agrees with the present. The persons so employed worked by turns, alternately reliev-

ing each other. They worked night and day, by the aid of lamps, and drove levels and sunk shafts, propping the ground as they advanced. When the ore was got, it was cleansed, according to the method now used, and smelted in a furnace; and afterwards cast into forms somewhat resembling the common pigs of lead.

We are told by Mr Pennant, that the British name of lead is lost; that we now use is derived from the Saxon. Borlase observes, as soon as the Romans had made a conquest of the country, they formed in the tin province, camps and roads, still visible, and left behind them vases, urns, and money; that evince them to have been a stationary people in the island.

Pliny likewise adds, that the Romans made mirrors of tin, and lined

the vessels of brass with it, to prevent any dreadful effect.

Strabo, in lib. 4, observes, that gold and silver were enumerated among the products of Great Britain. The Romans were apprized of this; and with our other valuable metals it no doubt proved an incentive to their ambition to effect the conquest.

Agricola, previous to the battle of *Gampian* mountain, in his oration to his soldiers, excited them to victory, by reminding them of the riches that would await the reward of valour.

In the reigns of James IV. and V. great wealth was produced in the *lead hills*, from the gold collected from the sand washed from the mountain; and in the reign of the latter it produced not less than 300%.

sterling, at this period no inconsiderable sum.

The art of coining was no doubt in use previous to the arrival of the Romans; witness the gold sickles of the Druids, and the coins found in Cornwall. Different sorts of metal were used, but chiefly gold, being the easiest fused, and most susceptible of an impression.

Dr. Borlase has preserved a series of these rude but valuable coins.— Previous to the Romans having attempted to form a face or impression on their coins, the first we know of which was inscribed, is that of *Cassivelaunus*, cotemporary with Cæsar. As soon as an intercourse took place between the Britons and the Romans, they began to imitate them, by putting letters on their coins; but no sooner was their

conquest effected than their coin was suppressed.

Coals were a useful article, well known to the ancient Britons before the arrival of the Romans, who had not even a name for them.— Their use, agreeable to Theophrastus, was common three centuries before Cæsar, to the workers of brass. The vast coal-pits in the neighbourhood of Flint, Northop, and Mold, have before been noticed. See Tour to Chester.

Mr. Ray informs us, that in Flintshire there is a certain vegetable, rare in other places, which here grows in plenty on the mountains, and in May makes a pretty appearance, with its white flowers. However singular it may appear, it is not noticed by the celebrated botanist Linnæus.

The *drinking horn*, so famed in Welsh story, is a large bugle, or horn of an ox, enriched with sculptured silver, and with a chain of the same metal. There were three species of them used in the royal court, and each was to be worth a pound.—See *Leges Wallicæ*.

To drink out of the royal cup at great entertainments was only a privilege of the officers of the palace. On all festive days, the horn was emptied at one tip, and then blown, to shew there was not any deceit.

The jovial horn was a subject of much wit and poetry in those days.

The bard *Owen Cyveiliog* has celebrated it in a poem composed immediately after a great victory over the English in Maelor.

In order to shew the spirit of *Welsh Poetry* at so early a period, we shall offer to the reader's notice a few of the first stanzas, &c. they were translated by a gentlemen of considerable poetic abilities.

On the Drinking Horn.

I.

Uprose the ruddy dawn of day,
The armies met in dread array
 On *Maelor Drefred's* field;
Loud the British clarions sound,
The Saxons, gasping on the ground,
 The bloody contest yeild.

II.

By Owen's arm the valiant bled,
From Owen's arm the coward fled
 Agast with wild affright;
Let then their haughty lords beware
How Owen's just revenge they dare,
 And tremble at his fight.

III.

Fill the *Hirlas horn*, my boy,
Nor let the tuneful lips be dry

That warble Owen's praise ;
Whose walls with warlike spoils are hung,
And open wide his gates are flung
In Cambria's peaceful days.

IV.

This hour we dedicate to joy ;
Then fill the *Hirlas horn* my boy,
That shineth like the sea ;
Whose azure handles, tipp'd with gold,
Invite the grasp of Britons bold,
The sons of Liberty.

V.

Fill it higher still, and higher,
Mead with noblest deeds inspire ;
Now the battle's lost and won,
Give the horn to *Gronwy's* son ;
Put it into *Gwgan's* hand,
Bulwark of his native land,
Guardian of *Sabrina's* flood,
Who oft has dy'd his spear in blood :
When they hear their chieftain's voice,
Then his gallant friends rejoice ;
But when to fight he goes no more,
The festal shout resounds on *Severn's* wind-
ing shore.

VI.

Fill the horn with foaming liquor,
Fill it up, my boy, be quicker,

Hence, away, despair and sorrow ;
Time enough to sigh tomorrow,
Let the brimming goblet smile,
And *Eðnyfed's* cares beguile.
Gallant youth, unused to fear,
Master of the broken spear,
And the arrow-pierced shield,
Brought with honour from the field.
Hadst thou seen, in *Maelor's* fight,
How we put the foe to flight ;
Hadst thou seen the chiefs in arms,
When the foe rush'd on in swarms ;
Round about their prince they stood,
And stain'd their swords with hostile blood ;
Glorious bulwarks to their praise,
Their prince devotes his latest days.
Now, my boy, thy task is o'er,
Thou shalt fill the horn no more.
Long may the King of kings protect
And crown with bliss my friends elect ;
Where Liberty and Truth reside,
And Virtue, Truth's immortal bride,
There may we all together meet,
And former times renew in heavenly converse sweet,

It may be some matter of curiosity to notice the celebrated heroine *Ethelfleda*, so frequently

mentioned in the mercian history. She flourished A. D. 907, and was the undegenerate daughter of the great *Alfred*, and the wife of Ethelred Earl of Mercia, under his brother-in-law Edward King of England.—On the birth of her first child, she separated from her husband, and devoted herself to deeds of arms. She lived upon the best terms with him, and they both united in all acts of piety and munificence, restored cities, founded abbeys, &c.

After the death of her husband, A. D. 912, she assumed the government of the mercian earldom, and, like an Amazon of old, took the command of the army. She became so celebrated for her valour, that she had the dignified names of lord and king given her.

She built no less than nine castles; she took Brecknock, made its queen prisoner, and stormed Derby.

After a glorious course, she died at Tamworth, 922.—Her loss was much regretted by the whole kingdom.

We find left on record the following lines to her memory:

Elfreda, terror of mankind,
Nature, for ever unconfined,
Stamp't thee in woman's tender frame,
Though worthy of a hero's name:
Thee, thee alone, the muse shall sing,
Dread empress and victorious king;
E'en Cæsar's conquests were outdone
By thee, illustrious Amazon.

Wales continued the refuge of the ancient Britons, when the Saxons had driven them out of England; and there they preserved the ancient blood royal of their kings, together with their laws and ancient

language, from the fury of their cruel enemy.

There always continued an implacable hatred between the two nations; and though Egbert, king of the West Saxons, reduced the heptarchy to a monarchy, yet he and his successors received no obedience from the kings or princes of Wales; but they held their own native mountains and vallies as absolute monarchs.

Here Cadwallader, the last king of Britain, and his descendants, governed the people as their lawful kings and princes, during the whole time of the Saxon government.

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he dispossessed the Saxon issue of the crown, and brought in the Normans. When he had obtained quiet possession of the

kingdom, the Welsh took no notice of his conquest over the Saxons; but considered it as a struggle between two nations,

Roderick the Great, who possessed all *Wales*, divided it between his three sons, long before the conquest: one governed the north, another the south, and the third Powys. These three princes would never acknowledge the conqueror had any superiority over Wales; from whence cruel and bloody wars ensued, and they made daily incursions on each other.

The lords at the conquest of the country, built castles for themselves and towns for their followers, in the most fertile parts. This accounts for the numerous castles in Wales, as may be seen in the ancient charters. There were towns before the conquest. They held their lord-

ships of the kings of England in chief, and they were bound to keep their castles with sufficient men for the keeping the enemies of the king in subjection.

The government by lords marchers continued in Wales till Henry the Eighth, from which period the welsh have been governed by the laws of England.



FOUR IN WATER

the state of the lake of Geneva in
which they were found to be
the cause of the epidemic of the lake
in 1817. The government by its means
was enabled to prevent the disease
the water being purified by
the use of lime.



Cambridge